01.17.14 | VOL. 4, ISSUE 23 | SPEAKING OUT

GA VOICE

on LGBT AGING

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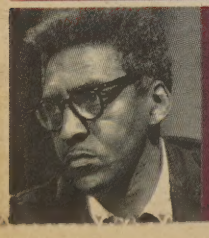

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Rustin-Lorde Breakfast honors legacies **Page 13**

'Book of Mormon'
Award-winning musical comes to the ATL **Page 19**

Best Bets
No excuse not to get out of the house **Page 22**

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OUTSPOKEN

FRIENDS & FOES IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"LGBQ participants are more generally positive about, and happier with, the quality of their relationship and the relationship which they have with their partner [than heterosexuals]."

— From study of 5,000 people over two years funded by the UK's Economic and Science Research Council (The Independent, Jan. 14)

"I am disappointed in the judge's ruling and troubled that the will of the people has once again been ignored by the federal government."

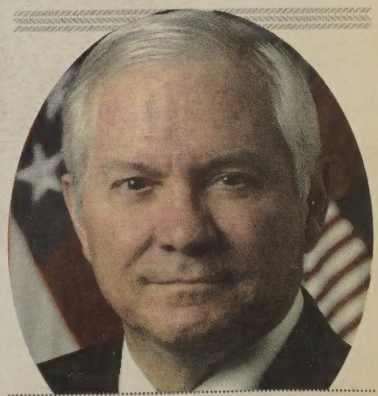
— Oklahoma Governor **Mary Fallin** released in a statement regarding Judge Terence C. Kern's ruling striking down the state's ban on same-sex marriage. (Towleroad.com, Jan. 14)

"Good evening to everyone in the audience and to all the women and gay men watching at home."

—**Amy Poehler**, opening the 71st Annual Golden Globe Awards with co-host **Tina Fey.** (NBC, Jan. 12)

"[M]oral disapproval of homosexuals as a class, or same-sex marriage as a practice, is not a permissable justification for a law."

—United States District Judge Terence C. Kern, in his written opinion striking down Oklahoma's constitutional ban on same-sex marriage as a violation of the 14th Amendment. (*Bishop v. Oklahoma*, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma, Jan. 14)



"The only military matter, apart from leaks, about which I ever sensed deep passion on [Obama's] part was 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,'"

—Defense Secretary **Robert Gates** saying in his new book,"Duty" that he was blindsided by President Obama's announcement that he would repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

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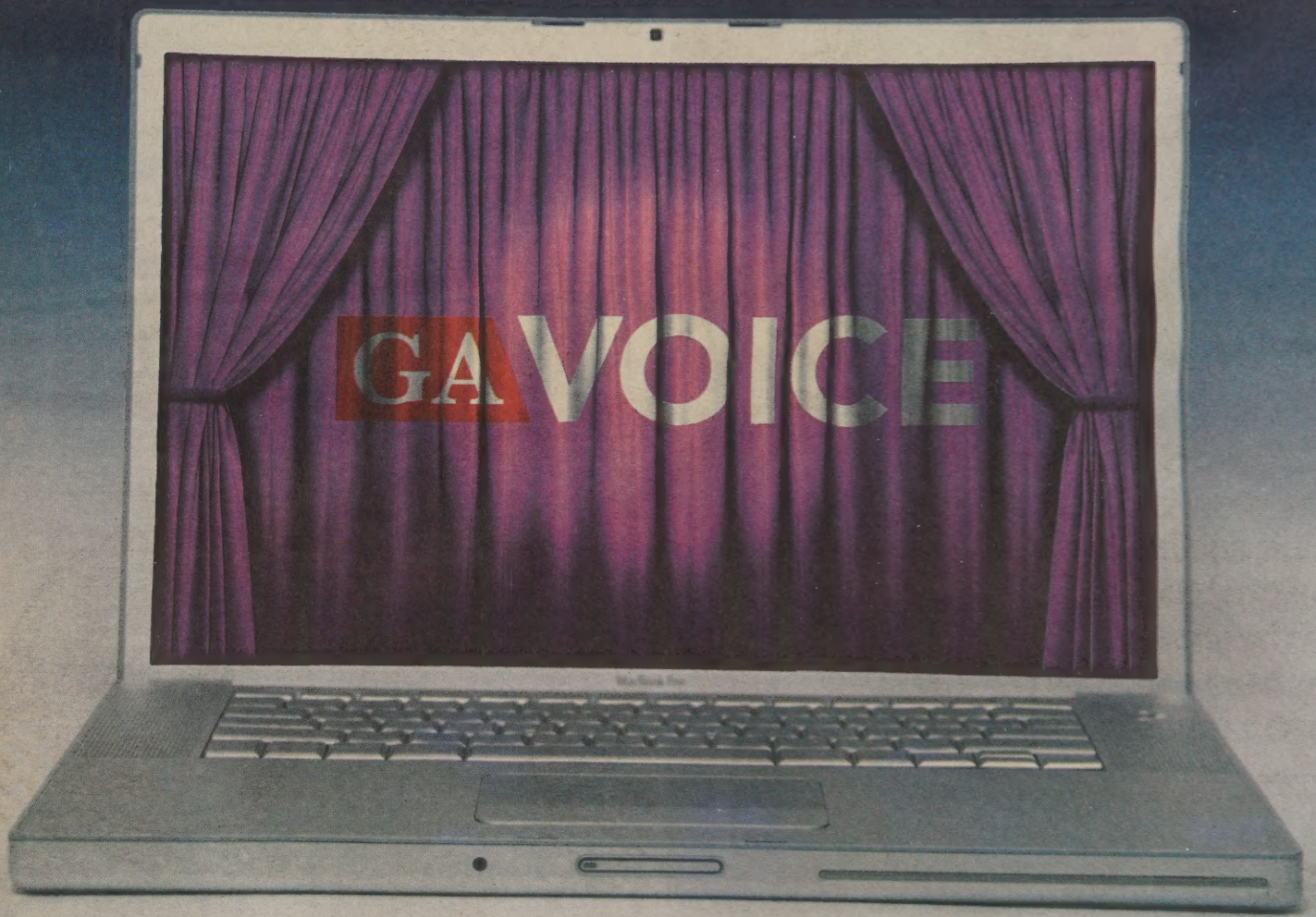


Premiering January 2014

'Everyone is not 20'

Support of family, each other keeps love alive for Pat and Cherry Hussain

By DYANA BAGBY

Nearly 30 years ago, Pat Hussain was touring the Toys R Us in Huntsville, Ala., where she was going to be the new store director when a woman jumped between the men in suits and reached out her hand.

She said her name was Cherry. "And you're going to love me," Pat recalls her saying.

Three decades later, including a marriage in Connecticut in 2009, and the love definitely flows between the two as they cuddle on their couch, playing with their two dogs, on a recent rainy Saturday morning.

"I was married to a man with two kids. But I fell in love at first sight with her," Cherry says. "And I'm just arrogant," she adds with a laugh. "I have style, class and charisma."

Pat, 64, and Cherry, 59, have pretty much been together since that fateful assignment. While Pat enjoyed playing the field and had a girlfriend in Atlanta, she was taken with this confident, sassy woman who was fearless in making her intentions known.

"I thought, oh, she's going to eat those words," Pat, who enjoyed playing the field, says of Cherry's forwardness.

"This cutie comes after the predator. I had roaming feet when we met. I didn't know she had that spark in her. She was a married woman with two children — that's definitely a no-no. But I could not resist a challenge," Pat says with a laugh. "She had thrown down the gauntlet."

There were the valid worries of being lesbians in a small-town and when Cherry divorced her abusive husband, she lost custody of her children because a judge believed her to be too immoral to raise them.

The children eventually moved back in with Pat and Cherry when they got older, escaping the abuse he wrought on them after their mother was gone, and the two have been co-parenting for years and are also now grandparents.

"The thing that has been difficult for us has been family. Theres a perception that what's visible in our community is young, single people. But that's not the whole truth," says Pat. "Without the advances in meds, there'd be a lot fewer of us around. Each year is a treasure. Everyone is not 20."

'I GOT MY HEART AND HEAD BROKEN'

Pat was one of the co-founders of the grassroots "Olympics Out of Cobb" movement in 1994 that forced Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games' to move the 1996 Olympic volleyball competitions out of Cobb County in response to the Cobb Board of Commissioners approving a resolution condemning the "gay lifestyle."

The pressure was so mighty that the OOCC, with the help of such groups as ACT UP, the Lesbian Avengers, Dykes & Faggots Bash Back, and the Human Rights Campaign also succeeded in ensuring the Olympic torch did not pass through Cobb County. That anti-gay resolution is still on the books, however.

Hussain was also a co-founder of Southerners on New Ground, a group that works to fight for equality on behalf of rural LGBT people, and she spent all her time organizing and fighting for equality. Until she just couldn't fight anymore.

"I got my heart broken and my head broken," Pat says. "I want to do social justice work so much and it so painful. You think you're tough, you're an organizer."

But before the start of a SONG conference, Pat's body simply quit working and she eventually was hospitalized.

"I claimed a front row seat in hell and I hope I never have to there again," she says.

The breakdown meant Pat had to quit working and the loss of Pat's income some years ago has taken a deep toll on the couple. Pat also has withdrawn much from any community activity but receives help from ZAMI NOBLA, an organization specifically serves black lesbians who are 40 and older, as well as close friends.

Cherry works at a grocery store and is the sole source of income. But she says she would do

on LGBT AGING

Pat and **Cherry Hussain** have been together 28 years after meeting in Huntsville, Ala. As they get older, they face physical and emotional difficulties and seek support from community. (Photos by Tina Tian)

anything to care for her wife.

"My wife suffers from depression, from PTSD. It was so horrifying for me," Cherry says. "To watch this beautiful, emotional, vibrant hummingbird full of sunshine and song who is now afraid. It was a challenge and still is a challenge. Sometimes the days are sunny, others are cloudy. I'm just glad my wife has me. She could have disappeared, she could have been homeless. But she is still the bright light of my love."

ATLANTA DREAM INSPIRES

Aging, for anyone, is a challenge, emotionally and physically. Cherry just had bones in her knees replaced.

"My knees knees feel good but the rest of me is still getting old. Work is one area — as we get older we're not able to do the jobs we used to do. It's a challenge to keep up at work and then they take your pay and you stress about that," she says. "My only challenge is getting up every morning and making sure my wife still loves me."

After seeing psychiatrists and therapists, Hussain found an outlet that puts the spark back in her soul — the Atlanta Dream, the city's professional women's basketball team. The season tickets are expensive, especially on one income, but Cherry, a former player and coach, say it is money well spent.

"My wife gets excited, I get excited. I don't care how much it costs. She comes out of her shell. She wants to go," Cherry says.

Of course SONG has never let Pat and Cherry go and continue to support the couple. But the Atlanta Dream, well, those women dribbling and shooting and winning games are a strong source of inspiration.

"After all the therapists and psychiatrists and drugs, the thing that made the biggest different to me is the Atlanta Dream," Pat says. "Therapy trough basketball. It's cheaper!"

NOT ALL 'WHITE GAY, MOSTLY MALE'

Pat and Cherry are still socially conscious even if they are not able to physically participate as often as they would like. And Pat still is keenly interested in the LGBT movement and the intersection of all oppressions — because gay people are not only discriminated by not being allowed to get married in Georgia or other states, but they are discriminated against when seeking housing or jobs or by federal immigration laws.

One way to help the movement, and all social justice movements, work well together is for the people who are fighting the good fight to get to know each other.

"We're doing some very difficult work without knowing each other," Pat says. "And that creates more tension. We're not understanding each other. I am so glad to have queer folk on TV, in the media.

"But that's just one aspect of under 30, white gay, mostly male," Pat adds. "Not to disparage a Wanda Sykes who is out there, but there has been two approaches in our [LGBT] community — one is to say, 'Look, I'm just like you.' And the other is to work to change and reorder the way that table and say I'm not trying to regain a seat at the table where I wasn't invited and am not welcome."

HOLDING HANDS 30 YEARS LATER

Nearly 30 years ago, when Cherry boldly introduced herself to Pat in a small-town Alabama Toys R Us store, neither thought they would be holding hands on a couch in the home they share near Decatur. They still hold hands when they go to sleep. As a way to deal with her depression, Pat writes poems. She quotes one of her favorites, "Our hands touch in bed/one palm facing the other/ a nest of fingers."

And for Cherry, words matter in how she talks to her wife.

"I don't tell her I love tell her. I say I'm in love with her," she says.

Plenty of fight left

Atlanta Vietnam vet recalls battling inner conflict over sexuality

By PATRICK SAUNDERS

Lucius Harwell, 67, a board member of Atlanta's Galano Club, struggles today with health issues he says were caused from being exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. At right, Harwell, 26, in 1972. (Courtesy photos)

on LGBT AGING

Lucius Harwell greets me with an oxygen tank and a smile.

The 67-year-old Cartersville native meets me at Galano Club, the LGBT 12-step meeting spot in Midtown. He's a Galano board member and comes here almost every day.

When people in AA meetings talk about what is going on in their life, they call it "sharing." So Galano is as good a place as any for us to talk. We grab an empty meeting room and Harwell proceeds to share his life.

Harwell has been attracted to both men and women for most of his life, and he dated "some very pretty girls" in high school and college. But it wasn't as easy to address the other side of his feelings.

"I didn't like it," he tells GA Voice. "I hated myself. You were such a pariah if you were gay, so I didn't want to be gay."

But he was honest enough with himself not to take a chance at ruining a girl's life. He was engaged to be married to a woman in his senior year of college. The wedding date was set. But Harwell wasn't.

"I had to tell her. I couldn't say 'gay,' but I did muster up 'bisexual,'" he says. "She's a beautiful, sweet person. Still is." She was the first person he came out to.

Soon after, Harwell's inner conflict would manifest itself thanks to another conflict much farther away.

'THIS IS WHAT YOU'LL BE LIVING WITH'

In the fall of 1970, Harwell showed up at the U.S. Army induction center on Ponce de Leon Avenue at what is now Ford Factory Lofts. His draft number was up, and he had no qualms about serving—even though his sexuality could have gotten him out of it.

But with a father that served in the Navy and a brother that had been in the Air National Guard, it wasn't a consideration.

"A lot of my friends said, 'Oh just tell them you're gay' but I didn't think it was right," he says. "I wouldn't honor my family by doing something like that. To me it was not being a man."

He was stationed at Fort Jackson in Savannah for basic training, when one morning he was called to battalion headquarters and given orders to go to Vietnam. "I was looking forward to seeing more of the earth," he says. He was 26.

But on a 30-day leave back home before shipping out, his secret came out into the open.

One day, Harwell's mother went through his things and stumbled across a love letter from another man. "All hell broke loose," Harwell says.

He left for Vietnam without telling his parents goodbye, which hurt his father; because he was more accepting than Harwell's mother. It was at this point that Harwell decided he was going to be straight.

When Harwell's captain found out he wasn't writing home to his mother, he ordered him to do so. It didn't go well.

"This was about the time that Jim Nabors and Rock Hudson were supposedly boyfriends," he says. "She clipped that article out of the Enquirer, sent it to me and said, 'See, this is what you'll be living with.'"

He managed to "stay straight" for a few months, before a former rival became something altogether new and different.

'WE SWORE UNDYING LOVE FOR EACH OTHER'

His name was Dan.

He and Harwell had gotten into a fight about one thing or another, but right before Dan was about to ship out, he slipped a note underneath Harwell's door apologizing...and admitting he had feelings for him.

"I tore off down to his room and we spent the next three days together," Harwell says. They wrote each other after Dan returned home to Ohio. Harwell was going to Hawaii with a couple of friends and Dan's 21st birthday was coming up during the same time, so he sent him a plane ticket.

"That's when we swore undying love for each other," Harwell says chuckling. "I couldn't wait to get out [of Vietnam]."

He moved in with Dan as soon as he got out of the service. They told people they were stepbrothers. "This was the 70s. You couldn't be out," he says.

They moved to Florida together and started a business. But a change in location didn't

Lucius Harwell (left) in Vietnam, age 26. Friends told him to say he was gay to get out of being drafted, but he refused.

change people's mindsets. "Very few people knew the truth," he says. "When we told a few people, they turned on us. It just wasn't healthy being gay yet."

As time went on, the relationship soured. Harwell was co-dependent. Dan was drinking too much. It ended. They were together for 14 years.

Harwell's mother passed away around the same time, and he came back to Georgia. He sold the home she left him and moved to Atlanta in 1988 for a fresh start.

'I DON'T HUNT FOR A DEFINITION ANY LONGER'

Harwell started going to AA meetings in Atlanta to deal with his addiction issues. It was there that he met the first person he had known who had HIV/AIDS. "I was more scared of being around someone with AIDS than I was being in Vietnam," he says. "We just didn't understand it yet."

He counts the number of friends he's lost to the disease at over 200. He couldn't stand anymore funerals. He had survivor's guilt.

As he grew older, Harwell started thinking about having a family. About having grandchildren. There were no men in his life to fill the bill, so Harwell married a woman.

"Some people have said, 'Oh that's just so wrong of you,'" he says. "I'm growing old and I don't want to grow old without family. It gives me a sense of responsibility." He considers her grandchildren his grandchildren. He and his wife live apart.

When asked if he dates, Harwell hesitates before answering. "I have friends, I go to movies," he says. "I'm true to my marriage though. I don't believe in divorce. That goes back to my parents."

"Am I defined as strictly being gay? I don't like that. You can define yourself in so many different ways. I don't really hunt for a definition any longer," he says.

He's going through therapy right now at the Atlanta VA Medical Center, dealing with what he calls "A lot of 'Who am I's?'"

When he goes out socially, he is typically the oldest one in the group. "Most people my age bore the hell out of me," he says. "They turn into little old ladies."

He looks back on his time in Vietnam fondly, with one major exception. "They sprayed me with Agent Orange, which has shortened my life," he says. "Everything that's going wrong with me physically is due to that." He has type 2 diabetes. Peripheral neuropathy which has left no feeling in most of his torso and legs. The COPD that requires him to cart the oxygen tank around on bad days, which have been more frequent lately.

"I loved serving my country, but they didn't have to poison me."

'DON'T BE A DOORMAT TO THE WORLD'

Regardless of his health issues and the bumps in the road along the way, Harwell is grateful. He's been battle-tested in more ways than one, especially when it comes to discrimination.

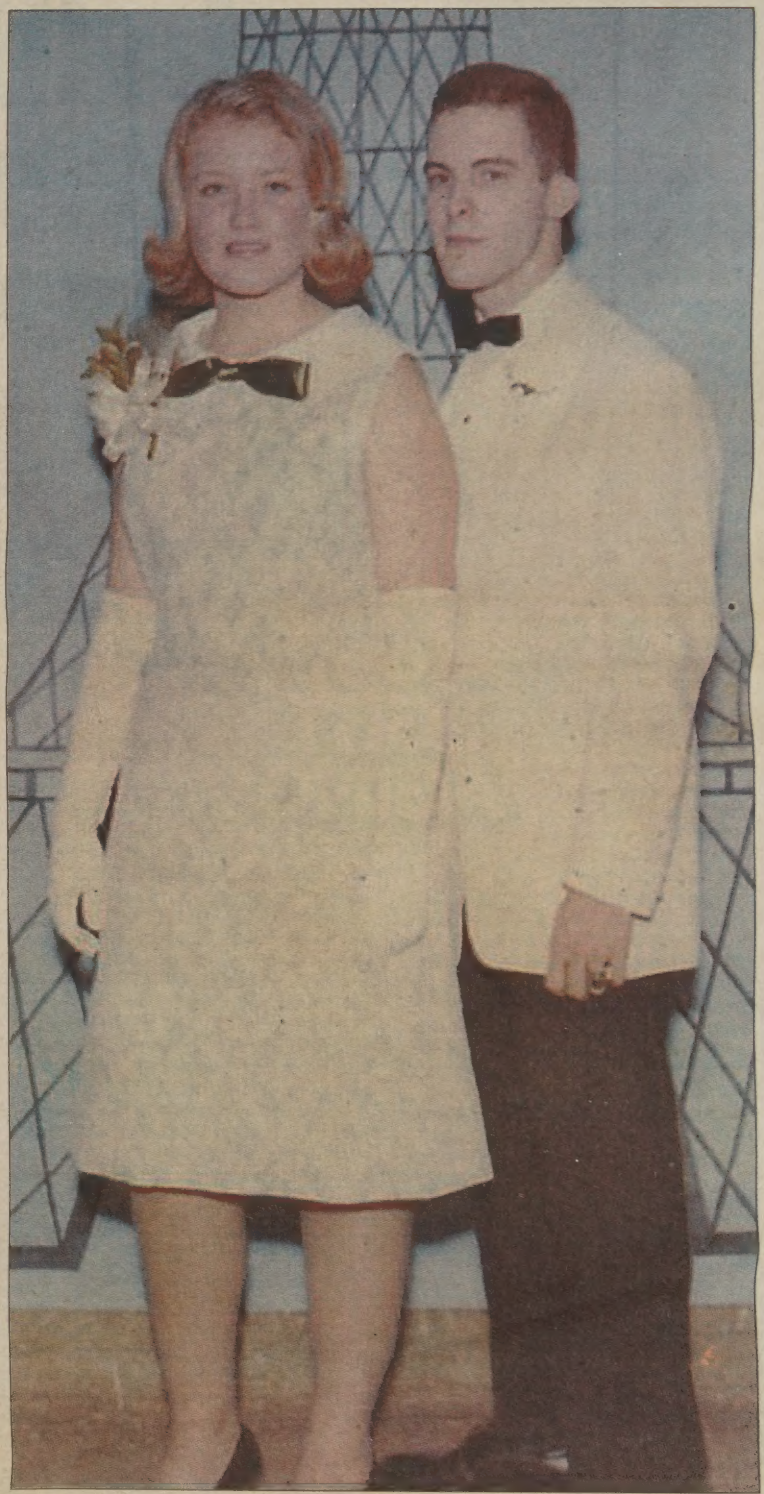
"I've ridden on the back of the bus at one time in my life," he says. "Then I got to ride up front. I've learned that I'm just as good as anyone else. I don't need to hide the fact that I think differently."

And he's not afraid to say what he thinks. He says there's no such thing as gay marriage, just marriage. He doesn't want gay rights, he wants equal rights. We shouldn't attach the word "gay" to everything, he says.

He believes in God but has no time for organized religion, which he says has caused the suffering of too many children who were a little different. He doesn't like how different subsections of the LGBT community are being split up by race.

And what advice would he give the 20-year-old Lucius? The one who hadn't come out yet? The one who had yet to fall in love? The one who survived a war, an epidemic and an addiction?

"Listen more than talk. Always be true to who you are. Don't be a doormat to the world. Stand up for your friends. Enjoy life every day."

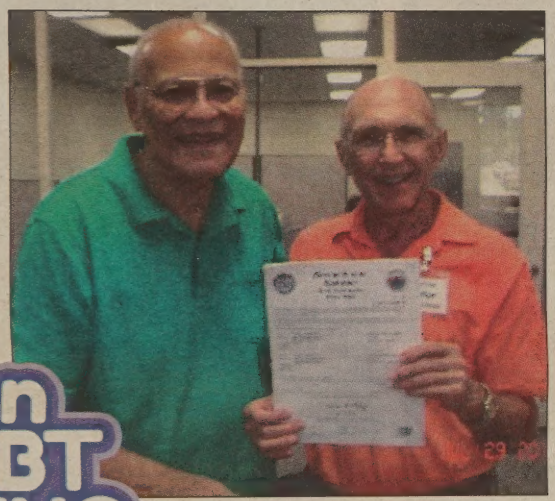


Lucius Harwell in 1964, age 18, at his junior/senior high school prom.

Forever in love

Interracial gay couple credits tough times for strengthening relationship

By DYANA BAGBY



Above, **Bailey Conaway** (left) and **Barry Hamon** shortly after they first met in 1966. Left, Barry Hamon and Bailey Conaway after they were married in August to celebrate their 47th anniversary. (Courtesy photos)

On LGBT AGING

They met the third Thursday of July 1966 in Baltimore, Md.

Barry Hamon was running up the steps for a job interview and the boss who was seeking a new employee was at the top of the stairs waiting.

"I still remember that day clearly. I saw this gorgeous young thing literally running up the stairs. He was wearing a checkered shirt. I fell in lust right away," says Bailey Conaway, 78, with a laugh.

That man in the checkered shirt and the man who was hired to be Conaway's secretary because he was the only person able to keep up with Conaway's demanding, but fair, work ethic is Homan, 67.

"Bailey was 30, I was 19, a country bumpkin from Pennsylvania, and Bailey was a part of the big city life," Hamon says.

Conaway hired Hamon and then asked him out to dinner that night, but Hamon politely declined. When Conaway returned from a two-week vacation, he asked him out again. Hamon accepted.

"He brought me this expensive bottle of cologne from that trip. I still have it and you can still get a whiff of the scent," Hamon says.

"I grew up in town where no black people. He was so warm. So sweet. So hot looking. I was intrigued.

I thought his is going to work out fine. I couldn't get enough of him," Hamon says. "He was very intelligent and did not play games. I liked that a lot."

And that first meeting led to love for almost five decades.

In August, they drove from their Snellville home back to Maryland where they met to get legally married on their 47th anniversary.

"We got married in Howard County and went to the courthouse where I worked on occasion," says Hamon, who is a former of court reporter. "And we had an absolute wonderful experience. The clerks, the policemen were all great. How things have changed."

It is a much different time for the couple. Conaway, who is black, and Hamon, who is white, were met with much resistance from anti-gay and racist people in Maryland at the beginning of their relationship in a time when gay people, and black people, were hated by a majority of people.

When they bought a home on the outskirts of the big city in the late 1960s, the KKK showed up in their white robes and burned a cross on their lawn. But even when they went to a gay bar in Florida not too many years ago, a bouncer would not let Conaway into the bar although his other friends and husband walked in with no problem. They were at another gay bar when a man jumped in front of Conaway and made aping noises and gestures as he left.

"We've not had a great deal of acceptance from either of our families and have had to deal with bigotry our entire lives, against us being gay, against me being black," Conaway says.

"Largely it's been two of us against the world. And I think that's one of the reasons we have such a strong relationship. We work our problems out with raw honesty and mutual respect."

'I KNEW IT WAS IMPORTANT'

As a child, Conaway spent a lot of time at his grandparents' home who lived down the street from Thurgood Marshall. Marshall successfully argued the Brown v. Board of Education case and would go on to become the first black person appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1967. Conaway played with Marshall's grandchildren and knew the adults were discussing serious issues.

"I didn't understand what all was going on but I knew it was important," Conaway says.

Conaway's father and stepfather abused his mother,

"People on both sides of my family were well-educated and had money, but we're talking about black folks good money — they earned it by teaching, practicing medicine, law. It was very difficult though because my mom was, excuse the language, the 'black sheep' of the family. She was the only one who didn't go to college of six children," Conaway says.

Conaway excelled in school, graduating from high school when he was 16 and then Morgan University. He spent a couple years in the U.S. Navy and had plans to become a clinical psychologist. His career steered into a different direction and he did a lot of psychological consulting for the federal government before he took a job with the Department of Health in Baltimore.

That led to a job that was part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty — a federal department dedicated to serving elderly Americans and responding to their needs. This program became the basis for what we now know as home health aid, Conaway says. When this federal grant was up, Conaway was hired to become department head of the Maryland health department — the first black person to earn the title.

And, Conaway stresses, hiring Hamon was not nepotism. His experience as a court reporter made him the best qualified person to accurately transcribe important document and testimony.

During this time, Bailey also hired a social worker, a white woman named Barbara Mikulski. She is now a U.S. Senator for Maryland.

ON A 20-YEAR HONEYMOON

Hamon's upbringing was vastly different. He grew up in a small town in Pennsylvania and decided to move to Maryland after he graduated from high school to go to a court reporter school a friend told him about.

Before he left, though, he worked at a shoe factory and a book company. He also fell in love with the neighbor boy.

"He was not gay. He had a hard, disturbed life and he liked the attention I showed him. But he was never going to fall in love with me. I knew if I ever wanted anything else I had to go somewhere else," Hamon says.

To pay for court reporting school, Hamon worked for an elderly antiques dealer who did appraisals of rare paintings. "He put a price on priceless objects," Hamon says.

When the antiques dealer died, Hamon needed another job. He went to an agency and the woman said she knew the perfect person.

"He's demanding but fair," she told him. And that led to Hamon and Conaway meeting nearly 50 years ago.

The two have rented a condo in a Naples, Fla., retirement complex. There they still deal with sideway glances and glares from racist and homophobic people. But they have also made friends as well. As long as they have each other, they say, their lives are completely fulfilled.

"When we got married, someone asked us if we were going on a honeymoon. We told them we've been on our honeymoon for 20 years," says Conaway.

'We are still part of the movement'

Lorraine Fontana continues fight for social equality after 40 years

on LGBT AGING

Lorraine Fontana, 66, has been a part of Atlanta's LGBT movement (and many other social justice movements) for some four decades. (Courtesy photos)

The Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance formed in 1972 and was made up of many activist women targeted during the 'Lavender Menace.'

By DYANA BAGBY

Lorraine Fontana, 66, moved to Atlanta 46 years ago with the VISTA program as part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. She worked in the housing projects of West End as well as with those living in Cabbagetown, helping residents organize for a better quality of life.

She really hasn't slowed down since then.

As a former paralegal for the Atlanta-based Lambda Legal office, Fontana continues to ensure the voices of older LGBT people are heard in all progressive movements — Occupy Atlanta, immigration rights, Grandmothers for Peace. You name it, if it has something to do with social justice, she's probably been part of it — marching, rallying and also photographing it all along the way.

The seed to fight for equality for all people was planted in her at an early age. She was active in anti-war protests during the Vietnam era and she tutored low-income students. But watching the turbulent times she grew up in was the catalyst that fueled her desire to work to make the world a better place.

"I came from a working class Italian family. My dad ended up in a transit authority union job, my mother was a typist. Everyone in our family was Democrats because that's who working-class people were," she says. "I think I became this way watching the civil rights movement on TV and reading, watching the news, paying attention, reading about issues. It became clear to me that the system was not working for a lot of people and I became leftist, a socialist, really early."

A native of Queens in New York, Fontana attended the Peoples College of Law in Los Angeles from 1976-80. This law school was different, though — it was an unaccredited, private, non-profit school run by the students and founded by progressive lawyers for students wanting to serve their communities and people who had limited resources.

But in 1980, Georgia changed its law so that it would not allow a graduate of PCL to take the State Bar and Fontana moved back to Atlanta where she finished her degree at the Atlanta Law School, which no longer exists.

After passing the Bar, Fontana started practicing and found she hated "boring" legal work.

"I wanted to do civil rights law, poverty law. There were not a lot of places in Atlanta where you could do that," she said.

Eventually, Fontana chose to not renew her bar license and became a paralegal, working at Lambda Legal from 2006 until she retired in 2013. "I loved it," she says.

FINDING PLACE WITH ATLANTA LESBIAN FEMINIST ALLIANCE

As Fontana became more involved in Atlanta's socially progressive scene in the late 1960s, she met up with a group of women she loved to socialize with because of their strong attraction to political activism and who were being targeted by the "Lavender Menace" of other women's groups. These women later became the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance, or ALFA, holding its first official meeting on June 23, 1972. It is within this group that Fontana became comfortable with her sexuality.

"They were leftist, radical, communists, socialists — I was finding a home not only politically but also for me emotionally," she says.

As a girl, Fontana said she dreamed about actresses she had crushes on and she was always the man in the dream, but she did not think anything of it. "I had crushes on men and women teachers. I never heard gay slurs — never had the horror of worrying about what if I'm queer," she says.

She never dated in high school or college, never got married and never felt the need to get married.

"There was never the sense I was missing something. I was just interested in doing what I was interested in doing," she says.

But through ALFA, one of the first organized groups for lesbians in Atlanta, Fontana found a safe space to become herself.

"When ALFA formed, that became the focus of my life. It was sexual and romance. This was a community I belonged in. I feel very lucky to have been part of that. We all came out in this wonderful, supportive, loving setting," she says. Fontana came out to herself in 1970. When she attended a feminist conference and was asked on a registration form to identify as either straight or gay, she checked the lesbian box — her first time acknowledging publicly who she is.

Over the years as more and more people come out and become visible in their communities, acceptance of LGBT people continues to grow — and that's what has to be done to ensure full equality, Fontana says. As she has become older in the LGBT movement, and other movements, it is important that people do not forget their elders.

"We are still part of the movement," she says.

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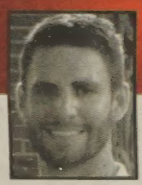
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Rustin-Lorde Breakfast 'catalyst' for all social justice events of year

New location for annual breakfast due to ongoing growth

By DYANA BAGBY

"We need in every bay and community a group of angelic troublemakers."
— Bayard Rustin

"The erotic is a measure between the beginnings of our sense of self and the chaos of our strongest feelings."
— Audre Lorde

It's a homecoming for the 13th annual Bayard Rustin-Audre Lorde Breakfast, held every year in Atlanta as part of celebrating Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

This year's theme, "Justice, Freedom, Desire: A Homecoming," is about bringing attention to progressive issues, especially when it comes to black LGBT people.

"There's been ongoing attention around social justice and what that means for the LGBTQ community, especially for black queer folk ..." says Craig Washington, a co-founder of the popular breakfast that has grown to attract more than 200 people.

In the past, the Rustin-Lorde has focused its discussions to issues including immigration, poverty and healthcare.

But it was time to revisit why the breakfast was originally founded, Washington says — to recognize black LGBT people — and this year tackle the subject of some of the crushing discrimination faced by young LGBT people.

Homecoming has two layers, Washington explains. There's the convening and reuniting as part of ritual that is shared each year at the breakfast. And then there is the actual physical shelter and security a home provides.

"There is a critical impact for younger queer folk that due to homophobia or poverty or racism they have been disconnected from their house, particularly those who are trans or gender queer and who cannot find shelter," he says.

Safe spaces are needed for these young people, places like the Phillip Rush Center and the feminist Charis Books & More. And it's unfortunate some of these places, like Outwrite Bookstore, are no longer here to provide that safe space, Washington says.

At the breakfast, roundtable discussions that are so much part of the event, will occur and people will have the opportunity to express what all the themes mean to them, Washington says.

The decision to add "desire" to the mix was intentional and includes, but is not limited to, sexual desire, he says.

"Audre Lorde [talked] a lot about the power of the erotic. Not just the hedonistic pleasure, although that is part of it, but the deeper, profound and spiritual dimensions there are to desire," Washington says. "You can't be free if you can't be free to express your desire."

Craig Washington and **Darlene Hudson** are co-founders of the annual Rustin-Lorde Breakfast honoring gay civil rights icons Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde. (File photo)

MORE INFO

Bayard Rustin-Audre Lorde Breakfast
Monday, Jan. 20
Doors open at 9:30 a.m., breakfast served at 10 a.m.
All Saints Episcopal Church
634 West Peachtree St., Atlanta, GA 30308
www.facebook.com/RustinLordeBreakfast

MLK March and Rally
Steps off at 1:45 p.m.
Corner of Peachtree Street and Baker Street and Xenora Clayton Way
www.mlkmarchaaar.org

CREATING COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

Darlene Hudson, who co-founded the breakfast with Washington, said moving to a new location this year is due to the larger and larger crowds coming together at the past location, Saint Mark United Methodist Church. For the past few years, it's been standing room only at the Rustin-Lorde Breakfast and it was time for change, Hudson says.

"We also want to try some new and different things this year so people can see the impact the breakfast is having. We want people to leave more informed, willing to connect with others," she says. "This is the catalyst that starts all the social justice events of the year."

Washington and Hudson as well as all organizers of the breakfast also want to focus on LGBT youth at this year's breakfast.

Hudson says there is too much violence directed to youths in their late teens and early 20s and they need to know there are safe spaces for them to go.

"And if we don't have them, let's create them, where they can be nurtured properly," she says.

A children's space was added to the breakfast a few years ago and has become popular, allowing younger participants to create signs to carry in the MLK March following the breakfast.

Speaking at this year's breakfast will be Rev. Maressa Pendermon of Unity Fellowship Church and Pastor Troy Sanders of Victory for the World Church in Stone Mountain. Both will also be the LGBT speakers at the rally at the King Center that follows the annual MLK March. This year, Southerners on New Ground, an organization working with rural LGBT people on issues ranging from immigration to fair wages, is the fiscal sponsor of the breakfast, bringing two like-minded organizations together in an official capacity, says Hudson.

The breakfast isn't just about speakers, Hudson says. It is and always been about creating community dialogue.

This year, the community goes international with activists visiting from India, Nepal and Pakistan attending as part of the International Visitor Leadership Program of the U.S. Department of State.

For those who are thinking about attending this year's breakfast and need some convincing, Washington says it's a time and place to be around others who are on the front lines and doing the foot work needed to make Atlanta, and the world, a better place to live for all people.

"The people that come are really about seeking and building community, they are about mutual support, they are about doing what they can to change the world in a positive away," he says.

"These people are fully alive and present. This breakfast is really about being with that tribe. Our participants are also a great demonstration of Atlanta's LGBTQ community pulling together," he adds. "It's a great demonstration of Atlanta's beloved community doing what we do."

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Georgia LGBTQ Archives Project saves our history

Social histories of everyday people sought by several organizations

By PATRICK SAUNDERS

(Above) **January 9, 1990:** Police stand in front of the Centers for Disease Control as gay activists from ACT UP stage a 'die-in' to protest the CDC's handling of the AIDS crisis. (AJC photos via Georgia State University)

(Right) **August 13, 1994:** Water fight between rafters on the Chattahoochee River during the 16th annual gay men's Hotlanta River Expo.

You don't have to be Harvey Milk to warrant having your history documented, and the team behind the Georgia LGBTQ Archives Project is on a mission to make you realize it — before it's too late.

The Archives Project is loaded with the foremost experts in archiving gay Georgia history. They include the Auburn Avenue and Ponce de Leon branches of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library, Atlanta History Center, Emory University's Manuscript, Archives and Rare Books Library (MARBL), Georgia State University's Special Collections & Archives, Kennesaw State University, Touching Up Our Roots, and more.

Their goals are to demystify the archival process, combine resources to fill out each other's collections, and make sure the history they document includes all voices across the LGBTQ spectrum.

The idea for the project sprung in late 2011 with Ann Edmonds, the manager of the LGBT circulating collection at the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library. She started going to Atlanta SAGE meetings (Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Elders) and became aware that some people were downsizing and didn't know what to do with some of their things.

Edmonds arranged a presentation to SAGE about how to archive items from their collections, inviting along representatives from Touching Up Our Roots, the Atlanta History Center, Georgia State and Emory as well.

What started as a one-off presentation turned into a follow-up meeting in December 2011, where they discussed meeting on a regular basis.

"After that it just took off on its own," Edmonds says. "It combusted."

The archivists realized that they had no mechanism to get together and combine resources, play off of each other and support each other.

"We had our first public awareness event at the Rush Center in May 2012," says Hillery Rink, president of the group. "It filled up the whole meeting space."

'AN INVISIBLE COMMUNITY'

"We want to demystify the process," Edmonds says. "Most people think about archives and Martin Luther King and Harvey Milk, not realizing that what researchers are looking for now are social histories."

They not only want to give a human face to certain historical events, but document who suffered the effects, who made things happen and why?

"That kind of human input is what's going to be gone if we don't preserve these things," Edmonds says.

With the South being less progressive than other areas of the country, the LGBTQ community here was at a greater risk of being ignored by traditional media, Rink says. "If you look at it, we were sort of an invisible community," he says.

Archiving history proves challenging for the LGBT community in particular. The AIDS epidemic wiped out not only a generation of gay men, but also their historical collections as well. And many families dispose of their LGBT relative's materials either because of ignorance or discrimination, says Edmonds.

"Many LGBTs are unfortunately not connected with their families, so when they die, their collections are just disposed of," says Edmonds. "Even in well-meaning families, it's just not something they're connected with and they don't know. So if you haven't made provisions for it, your part of the picture is gone forever."

(Above) **December 3, 1990:** DeKalb County police arrest a woman, protesting the CDC's handling of women with AIDS.

(Left) **November 10, 1994:** Outwrite Bookstore and Coffeehouse owner **Philip Rafshoon**.

(Above) **October 11, 1989: Moorylien Jenkins** and **David Kelly** on National Coming Out Day at the Atlanta Gay Center

(Left) **September 7, 1986: Michael Hardwick,** defendant in the Georgia sodomy case Bowers v. Hardwick, speaking to the Atlanta Business and Professional Guild.

'PEOPLE WILL BE LOOKING FOR IT IN THE FUTURE'

Now that the Georgia LGBTQ Archives Project has been incorporated (thanks to pro bono work from the Stonewall Bar Association), they are applying to be a 501(c)3 organization so they can raise money to advance the cause.

Simultaneously, they're recognizing the need to diversify the collection. In short, most of the collection so far is from upper middle class white males and a modest amount of women.

Members of the project continue to give presentations to local groups, like the March 1 event with the Atlanta Prime Timers. Another public awareness event is planned for later this year that will be similar to the one held at the Rush Center in 2012.

In the meantime, the project wants to hear from seniors and others before their place in Georgia's LGBT history is lost.

"If you're not there, part of the picture is missing, and it will never be able to be filled in," Edmonds says. "People care, and they will care in the future, and they will be looking for it in the future."

Saving Our Stories

GEORGIA LGBTQ ARCHIVES PROJECT

What is the Georgia LGBTQ Archives Project?

A group of archivists and librarians who are dedicated to preserving Georgia's LGBTQ history. They have combined resources to point people in the right direction when they have something they want to donate. They will also provide resources on how to view the archive.

Why is there a need for this project?

Because much of LGBTQ history is lost when people pass away, either because their families are not aware of the historical value of certain items, or they don't care due to intolerance. The AIDS epidemic also wiped out a significant portion of our history.

Where can I view a sample of the archive?

At the group's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pages/Georgia-LGBTQ-Archives-Project/257162497710554.

Each school or organization also has more information about their archive online along with visiting information if applicable:

- Ponce de Leon Branch of Atlanta-Fulton Public Library: http://www.librarything.org (username poncedeleonlibrary, password 123456)
- Emory University's Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library (MARBL): http://marbl.library.emory.edu
- Kennesaw State University's Museums, Archives & Rare Books: www.web.kennesaw.edu/archives/lgbtiq-project
- Georgia State University: www.research.library.gsu.edu/lgbtqiq

What is eligible to be donated?

More than you realize. Photo albums, private letters, papers, computer hard drives, protest signs used in parades, t-shirts, flyers, gay media publications and much more.

I'm not famous, so why would the Georgia LGBTQ Archives Project want my stuff?

"Fame is not required" as the group *will tell* you. If you're considering *something* to give, contact them and let *them* decide whether it's worth *being* archived.

Okay, I think I have something I want to donate. What do I do?

Message the group at their Facebook page. Or e-mail group president Hillery Rink at hilleryrink@yahoo.com. Or call him at 404-659-3133.

The archivists want me to sort through my stuff first before submitting, right?

No! There is no telling what you have and the archivists would much rather sort through it themselves so nothing important gets thrown out before it reaches them. The very things that people think aren't *useful are the very things an archivist might be* missing.

What if I can't or don't want to donate my things right now?

Contact the Archives Project and they will help you arrange to have it written into your will so that nothing gets tossed out.

WISH LIST

Here are some items that a couple of the organizations are looking for. Happy hunting!

Kennesaw State University

1. Missing/damaged issues of Southern Voice. View the list of the issues they are looking for here: www.web.kennesaw.edu/archives/lgbtq-publications-collection
2. People involved with early LGBTQ student groups and events on the KSU campus
3. Cobb Citizens Coalition
4. Activists and organizations involved with the "Olympics Out of Cobb" campaign

Georgia State University

1. Issues of The Atlanta *Gay Center* News
2. Issues of *RFD (journal* of the Radical *Fairies)*
3. Issues of local lesbian newsletter Amethyst
4. Issues of local Prime Timers newsletter Aptitudes

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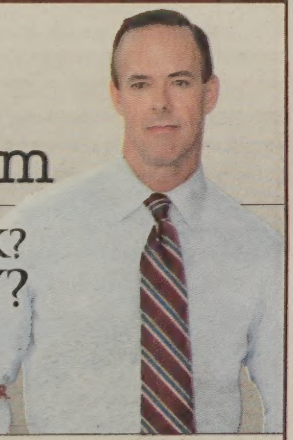

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Gay culture's fixation with youth, beauty on upswing

Ads push pills and surgery, but what about facing reality?

By CLIFF BOSTOCK

About the time I turned 42, my therapist delivered an ultimatum. If I didn't agree to become sexually and romantically abstinent for a year, he wouldn't continue to see me. It seems that the compulsions of my midlife crisis were inhibiting my transformation into a mature, middle-aged gay man — otherwise known among the young as a respectable dead person.

I agonized for a week. *Mental health or lots of random dick? Adapting to middle age or lots more crazed adolescent romance?* I decided to give abstinence a try and I spent most of my spare time that year in the bathtub with scented candles. But I also enrolled in grad school for a new career in psychology. I spent half my time for two years interning on the West Coast. I wrote three weekly columns, did radio work and conducted workshops. I ramped up my already obsessive workouts at the gym. You need biceps to masturbate.

It really was a time of huge positive change. Childhood shapes much of life, but there comes a time, typically between 40 and 55, when the parts of us that have been denied expression come raging out of the closet of lifelong repression. It's an opportunity for true transformation ... or total lunacy. Usually both.

The typical lunacy is the sexual and romantic stuff that my therapist effectively banned. It would have been hard to find my way into a new career while I was moving a new man into my apartment every seven weeks. No, not everyone who hits midlife needs abstinence. Some of us just go way crazier than others. (And, yes, my therapists's ban was temporary.)

Gay men really are special in this respect. We grow up hearing that our bodies, the source of the sexual desire that makes us different, are inherently evil. That's why, in the

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'Golden Gays'
www.slice.ca/video/#golden-gays/video

'Old Dogs and New Tricks'
www.olddogsnewtrickstheseries.com/aboutus.html

Atlanta Jacks
http://ca.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/atlanta_jacks/info

Atlanta Prime Timers
www.atlantaprimetimers.com

SAGE Atlanta
www.facebook.com/sageatl

on LGBT AGING

years of "gay liberation," having lots of sex was literally considered a self-affirming act of civil disobedience (just as it was among feminists of the time). We appropriated the stereotypical markers of blue-collar masculinity — jeans, flannel shirts, buzz cuts, and facial hair — and flooded gyms to get pecs and abs to exhibit on dance floors while we tapped tambourines. It was kinda campy and kinda hot.

This particular aspect of gay culture — the obsession with youth, masculinity and beauty — has grown only more intense. Where once gay retirees typically moved into the well-known closet of invisibility, you can now move to Fort Lauderdale or Palm Springs, go on testosterone replacement therapy, pop Viagra, rip your shirt off, and dance to the Village People at 7 p.m. — just before your bedtime. Personally, I'd rather die prematurely than retire in FTL, but, really, you can live your second adolescence anywhere now, including cyberslums like Manhunt, Adam 4 Adam, Scruff, and – quelle horreur! – Silver Daddies, where old age is a fetish.

Aging does bring health problems and — in case you forgot — death. But the healthcare industry has become ever more adept at medicalizing the cosmetic and sexual effects of aging. A couple of weeks ago, I counted 12 ads in David and Fenuxe magazines for services to eliminate those unsightly sags, bags and wrinkles. Meanwhile, I didn't see a single man who looked much over 40 in the magazines' candid photos.

There is nothing inherently wrong with struggling to maintain youthful looks and a fully functioning penis, of course. The problem is how common vanity misdirects us. The New York Times told a heartbreaking story in that respect two years ago when it reported the death of Bob Bergeron, 49, a gay psychotherapist, who killed himself just before publication of his self-help book,"The Right Side of Forty: The Complete Guide to Happiness for Gay Men at Midlife and Beyond."

Bergeron's suicide note included an arrow pointed toward the title page of his book with the words:"It's a lie based on bad information."

Sorry to say, but I think his note was correct to a great extent. If you look up videos of Bergeron giving talks on the subject, you quickly realize his book was the result of his own struggle to adapt to losing the status of "pretty boy." Fine, but his recommendations aren't really about changing self image, becoming an elder. They're about how to hold onto the values associated with being hot and young.

An inquiry into what it means to be gay, out and older is finally stirring, but the vast majority of it is motivated by the same thinking. Check out episodes of the Branch TV series, "Golden Gays" or the ongoing web video series, "Old Dogs and New Tricks." Both, but especially "Golden Gays," include virtually no self-reflection in their stories of maintaining a desperate hold on youth and beauty. Sure, it's trashy irreality programming, but would it hurt to add the depth of, say, "Duck Dynasty"?

Les Bouska, a self-styled "total image expert" who owns Atlanta Hair Studio, offers a different attitude toward aging that doesn't totally eclipse brain function. He's an advocate of cosmetic work, of course: "There is no need for any man that does not want to look his age to do so. We have countless options available to prevent or erase the visible signs of aging."

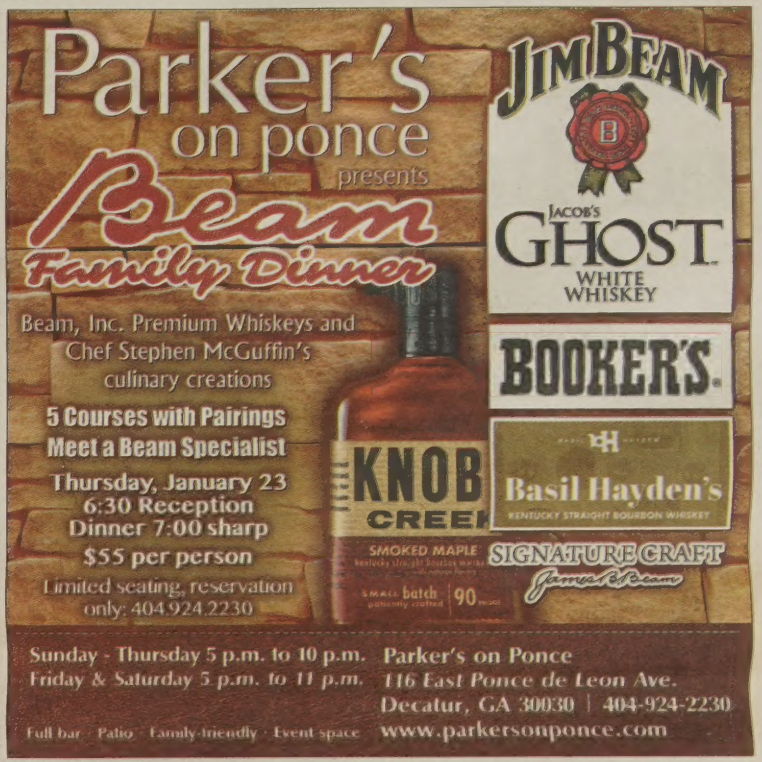
I think that's a bit of an exaggeration, and it doesn't mention the high prices involved. But he's also engaged in spiritual and recreational practices that include sex. He hosts the monthly Atlanta Jacks sex club, for example, where his concern, above all, is creating a space "without judgment" for men to engage in safe sex. "Any man," he says, "that has the balls to strip down and walk in that room is welcome. Age, race, size, shape, or any other physical trait is secondary to the energy he brings to the group." Thus sex retains its importance but minus the competitive vanity that can make aging miserable enough to provoke suicide.

There are also alternative social groups around town, like the Atlanta Prime Timers. SAGE Atlanta offers assistance to aging LGBT people.

None of us — obviously including me — is immune to the wish to be awash in the fountain of gay youth. But there comes the point when you've really got to find a new moisturizer.

There comes a time, typically between 40 and 55, when the parts of us that have been denied expression come raging out of the closet of lifelong repression. It's an opportunity for true transformation ... or total lunacy. Usually both.

Cliff Bostock, PhD, offers workshops and individual work in various personal growth topics, including gay aging. See his websites, cliffbostock.com and gayaging.wordpress.com.



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LGBT senior housing community on the drawing board for Atlanta?

Atlanta developer surveying community, hunting for property

By PATRICK SAUNDERS

Faced with a demographic with a unique set of circumstances, LGBT-friendly senior housing communities are sprouting up in several cities around the country. And an Atlanta real estate developer, emboldened by years of research and an ongoing survey of the marketplace, is on the hunt for a property on which to build.

"This is the first time we've had out gay people as seniors, so we haven't had a population that was out that we can emulate as far as how to have an active life," says Cloud 9 Global's gay developer Karl Gustafson. Cloud 9 Global seeks to provide "urban living for inclusive healthy aging," according to its website.

And housing is a topic that cannot be avoided when discussing LGBT seniors.

"In every conversation that we have in every town hall meeting or focus group or survey that we have ever done of LGBT seniors, the issues of housing come up," says Health Initiative Executive Director Linda Ellis.

Now that that segment is "coming of age," more and more evidence is appearing that shows LGBT seniors are facing discrimination from senior housing residents and staff and are sometimes forced back into the closet.

As a result, LGBT-friendly senior housing communities have opened in Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Philadelphia, and there are plans in the works for communities in San Francisco and Chicago.

Questions remain as to what such a community would look like in Atlanta, how it would be funded and how long before it can become a reality.

Gay developer Karl Gustafson wants to build an LGBT-friendly senior housing community in Atlanta — an idea that is catching on in cities such as Philadelphia, home to the gay-friendly John C. Anderson apartment building. (Courtesy photo)

On LGBT AGING

'PEOPLE ARE HAVING TO GO BACK INTO THE CLOSET'

The idea of an LGBT-friendly senior housing complex came to Gustafson several years ago when his parents were looking for affordable senior living. After seeing the hoops they had to jump through just to find one or two good communities, it got him thinking about the additional challenges LGBT seniors must face.

"People not just in Atlanta but around the country can get into senior housing and people are cordial to them, but no one is making any friends with gay folks," Gustafson tells GA Voice. "People are having to go back in the closet, hide their pictures, because they feel they'll get abused and ostracized."

He also stresses the unique circumstances LGBTs face, as they are less likely to have children they can live with, and families are less supportive.

He ran an initial survey six years ago after his parents' experience, then last summer he created a new, expanded survey, partnered with Atlanta's SAGE affiliate, a program managed by The Health Initiative, and started putting it out to the community last fall via promotion at Atlanta Pride and getting organizations to send it through their email lists.

He has nearly 400 responses so far, and among the findings, he discovered that only about 10 percent of respondents are interested in LGBT-only senior housing. So it's not so much about all-gay all the time, and more about inclusivity, he found.

Ellis has found less consistent answers in her dealings with the community.

"In every conversation that I have, someone there will want it to be LGBT-specific housing, someone there will want it to be LGBT-friendly but mixed with heterosexual senior housing, someone will want to live in a community that combines seniors with multi-generations within the LGBT community," she says.

"As many individuals that are raising the questions, there are that many answers," she continues. "We don't know yet what is the best or most sustainable here in Atlanta."

'YOU MUST HAVE A UNITED FRONT IN THE LGBT COMMUNITY'

Just this week, the ribbon was cut at Philadelphia's John C. Anderson Apartments, a gay-friendly 56-unit complex that is unique in that it's financed entirely with public money.

Mark Segal, publisher of the Philadelphia Gay News, led the push to bring this idea to life almost 10 years ago.

"You must have a united front in the LGBT community and you must understand political clout," he tells GA Voice.

Ideas were floated to organizations both inside and outside the LGBT community, including senior organizations in the area, government leaders, neighborhood organizations and more.

The group stuck to a guiding principle throughout: don't settle for anything less than equal.

"We wanted to be treated by HUD and every other city, state and federal agency in equal form just like any other organization or community interest," he says. "We had a good proposal and we expected it to be funded. We finished the building in record time and on budget."

As for the end result of the journey, Segal opens up about a recent day giving a tour of the building to a group of senior non-profit agencies.

"I walked into one of the apartments and a woman was inside who turned and said to the whole group, 'Welcome to my apartment!'" Segal says. "Which was weird because we hadn't opened the building to residents yet. But she said, 'Well it will be mine in two weeks.'"

"Then she asked me if she could have her girlfriend there," he continues. "I said, 'Of course, why wouldn't you be able to?' And she said, 'Because the other senior housing project I lived in wouldn't let me bring my girlfriend in."

TURNAROUND AND WORKAROUNDS

Aside from what the community should look like, things always turn back to money. Gustafson estimates that for a 150-200 unit intown community, it would cost roughly $40 million, and he expects it to be privately funded.

Ellis agrees that public funds will be harder to come by in Georgia.

"One of the problems we have to deal with in this state, being a predominantly red state, is we don't have the opportunity for a combined public/private partnership that others do in Chicago or Philadelphia," she says.

Meanwhile, Atlanta LGBT seniors have figured out workarounds.

"There are people who are figuring out their own solutions while we're having these conversations," Ellis says. "There are seniors that are intentionally moving into condominium complexes or cooperative housing arrangements or neighborhoods where they know they'll be surrounded by other LGBT seniors or LGBT individuals and they're creating communities. So while we're having these larger conversations, people are forming their own sense of housing and intentional community."

She sees some sort of LGBT-friendly senior housing community — whatever it may look like — arriving within the next 10 years.

Gustafson is more optimistic.

"I would certainly hope within five years from now that that's a real option for us in Atlanta," he says.

THEATER BY JIM FARMER

Gay-fave 'Book of Mormon' coming to Fox Theatre

Most performers have to wait awhile and pay their dues before they land starring roles in splashy musicals. Georgia native Grey Henson, luckily, didn't have to wait — he got a plum role in "The Book of Mormon" as his first professional stage gig after college. One of the most acclaimed and popular musicals of the last decade, the gay-themed "Mormon" debuts in Atlanta at the end of the month, courtesy of Broadway Across America.

As a gay performer growing up in Macon, Henson spread his wings and attended Carnegie Mellon University after high school. He thought he would pursue a dancing career, but after a pre-college camp at Carnegie he realized he wanted to pursue acting/musical theater. He has been with the show since the national tour opened in August 2012 in Denver. He auditioned for the role and knew he got it even before he graduated.

Created by the "South Park" team of Trey Parker and Matt Stone, as well as Robert Lopez, co-composer and co-lyricist of "Avenue Q," "The Book of Mormon" follows a pair of Mormon missionaries as they visit a village in Uganda. As they try and spread the word of their scriptures, they realize the natives have larger issues to contend with.

DETAILS
'The Book of Mormon'
Jan. 28 – Feb. 9
The Fox Theatre
660 Peachtree St. NE,
Atlanta, GA 30308
www.atlanta.broadway.com

Henson plays the sexually conflicted Elder McKinley, the Mormon district leader who also visits the area.

"He is a 19-year-old overseeing other 19-year-olds, so he feels full of power," says Henson. McKinley is having all these thoughts he realizes he should not be having. In his big number "Turn it Off," he suggests to his fellow missionaries that they simply switch off negatives feelings and thoughts.

"Mormon" won a slew of Tony Awards — nine in all, including Best Musical. As he has criss-crossed the country with the production, Henson has seen city after city fall for it. Every blue moon there is someone who is upset, he says, noting that some people think the musical is racier than it is.

"It's usually someone who knows nothing about the show or the 'South Park' guys," says the actor. "Ninety-nine percent of the crowds love it."

LGBT audiences have been particularly accepting of "Book of Mormon," Henson feels. "The show, at the end of it, is touching and is about acceptance," he says. "For McKinley, it does get better and LGBT audiences can see that he has struggled."

Henson still calls Macon his home, although at some point he realizes he will need to move to New York to further pursue a performing career.

Another gay performer in the cast is Daniel LeClaire, who has also been with the musical since the national tour launched. He is part of the ensemble, bringing to life many characters including two of the elders. Like Henson, he feels lucky to be with the national tour.

"This is the only show I would think about being part of for two years," he admits. "It's all about openness and love; there is no hate," he says. His visit will be his first professional gig in the ATL. He is in no hurry to leave but when he does he might focus on his music career more so than acting.

Among his other stage and TV credits was the recent "Betty White 90th Birthday" special. He had a blast. "She is the hardest working woman in the business," he recalls. "She never sat down the entire time."

Grey Henson of Macon, Ga., stars in the award-winning musical 'The Book of Mormon.' (Publicity photos)

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GA VOICES OUR OPINION

EDITORIAL

Goodbyes & hellos

Moving past drama to continue to serve our community

By CHRIS CASH,
Managing Partner

Media drama. GA Voice was a part of some much discussed scuttlebutt in 2013. Some of you, maybe many of you, read about it in our pages and on our website as well as on Project Q. It made for exciting headlines and fodder particularly for those who love to espouse their opinions and judgments. Just this week Project Q reported that Fenuxe has been sold to another media group with ties in Atlanta and in Tampa. And the beat goes on. We are more than ready to move on- in fact, we have moved on- but let me offer the truthful and not-so-dramatic facts about a case we consider closed. Given that we are bound by a confidentiality agreement with certain parties, I am limited in what I can say but I can offer enough information so there is no more confusion- for those of you who care. If not, just skip to the last few paragraphs.

HERE IS THE SKINNY

Yes, we were approached by a local LGBT media outlet who expressed interest in purchasing us. Yes, we did engage in discussions. Why? Because we thought it might be a way to insure the survival and growth of both media outlets in a time when advertising dollars (which we cannot function without since we do not charge for the newspaper or content on our website) are hard to come by. No, GA Voice never signed a Letter of Intent. Yes, Letters of Intent were offered but we could not come to agreement on terms. Given that we could not come to agreement, after many attempts, we told our potential purchaser "thanks for the offer but no thanks" and moved on. It was an amicable split — no drama, no threats and nothing but best wishes for each other. Case closed.

A local LGBT newspaper is vital to the health of the community it serves. I do not take our role lightly nor do I fool myself that we are above scrutiny. We are a business trying to survive like any other small business. Some days it is difficult, some days it is exalting. Those days that are exalting never have anything to do with money, it always has to do with our community and our readers. Feedback that says how vital we are; stories that lift us all up whether it's about marriage equality or a young person who comes out to his or her sports team. We relish these stories and they energize us to continue our work.

MOVING ON

Which is what we have done. As many of you already know, Dyana Bagby is now our editor. Dyana served as deputy editor since we launched in early 2010. Prior to that, she was with Southern Voice for many years. Her knowledge of this community, and her dedication to it, is unsurpassed. She is a journalist in every sense of the word and we know how fortunate we are to have her leading our editorial staff.

Just a week or so ago we were lucky enough to have Patrick Saunders join our team as deputy editor. Patrick, born and raised in Atlanta, is a graduate of the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication. He wrote for that school's newspaper, The Red & Black, and he covered the gay beat for Creative

Expect more coverage, more timely coverage and stories that mean the most to you. Also, expect a new website that is more interactive than our old one.

Deputy Editor **Patrick Saunders** is the newest member of the GA Voice staff. (Photo by Kyle Strahl)

Art Director **Mike Ritter** and Editor **Dyana Bagby** at the GA Voice booth during Atlanta Pride 2013. (File photo)

Loafing as a freelancer for several years, covering the demise of Southern Voice and the birth of GA Voice. He caught our eye then with his unbiased reporting and skillful writing. Patrick also worked as senior writer for Fenuxe from mid-2010 to mid-2011 and recently did freelance work for Project Q.

"I've run in the same circles with the GA Voice team for several years now and have always respected them and the work they do," Patrick says. "The timing finally lined up for both of us and I couldn't be happier to join such a respected publication. I look forward to telling the community's stories and documenting the movement for GA Voice for years to come."

Our editorial team, which includes art director Mike Ritter, is formidable.

"I am so excited to have Patrick join the GA Voice team and bring his talent to our newspaper and website," says Bagby. "I have always been impressed with his reporting and I know he will be a great addition to covering LGBT Georgia."

Expect more coverage, more timely coverage and stories that mean the most to you. Also, expect a new website that is more interactive than our old one as we attempt to keep up with the ever-changing techno landscape. You will find better display on your mobile devices as well. The revamped website is scheduled to debut on Jan. 24.

As always, we encourage your thoughts on how we can better serve all members of our community. Reach out to me, publisher Tim Boyd, Dyana or Patrick with any ideas you have, even if you think they might not be of interest. Chances are good that we will find them interesting.

GA VOICE

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Postmaster: Send address changes to the Georgia Voice, PO Box 77401, Atlanta, GA 30357. The Georgia Voice is published every other Friday by The Georgia Voice, LLC. Individual subscriptions are $60 per year for 26 issues. Postage paid at Atlanta, GA, and additional mailing offices.

The editorial positions of the Georgia Voice are expressed in editorials and in editor's notes. Other opinions are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Georgia Voice and its staff.

To submit a letter or commentary: Letters should be fewer than 400 words and commentary, for web or print, should be fewer than 750 words. Submissions may be edited for content and length, and must include a name, address and phone number for verification. Email submissions to editor@thegavoice.com or mail to the address above.

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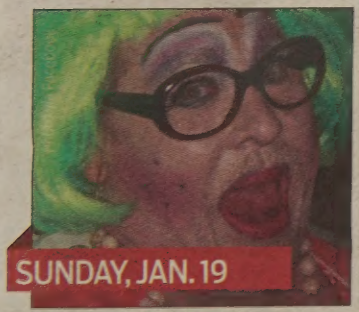
Event spotlight

FRIDAY, JAN. 17

Traxx Girls presents the **Ladies Lounge** with **DJ Mary Mac** as part of MLK weekend fare at **My Sister's Room**, 10 p.m., www.mysistersroom.com.

SATURDAY, JAN. 18

Wassup N Atl and **Traxx** combine for this MLK party with **DJ Trouble, DJ Marz**, eight VIP sections and a huge dance floor, from 10 p.m. – 3 a.m at **Future Vision**, 1212 Fowler Street, Atlanta, GA 30318, www.traxxatlanta.com, www.wassupnatl.com



SUNDAY, JAN. 19

It's **Knomie Moore's** last performance with the **Armorettes** at the camp drag troupe's **35th anniversary show at Burkhart's.** Over the years, the Armorettes have raised some $3 million for AIDS organizations, 8 p.m., www.burkharts.com

BEST BETS

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Tell us about your LGBT event

There are two ways to submit your LGBT event for inclusion in our online and print calendars. Submit your event info to www.theGAVoice.com or e-mail details to editor@theGAVoice.com.

FRIDAY, JAN. 17

The Third Friday Film Series kicks off the new year with the documentary **"A Place at the Table,"** looking at the issue of hunger in America, 7 – 9 p.m., **First Existential Congregation** of **Atlanta**, www.irstexistentialist.org

The Other Show starring **Celeste Holmes, Edie Cheezburger, Evah Destruction, Jaye Lish, Miami Royale** and **Violet Chachki** with special guests **Extasy Grey** & **Kryean Kally**. $5 cover. Show starts at 9:30 p.m., **Jungle**. www.jungleatl.com

Rockstars Productions continues its MLK Weekend festivities tonight at **Einstein's** from 7 – 11 p.m. and then at its **Black Preferred Party** at **Atria**, from 10 p.m. – 4 a.m., 1212 Fowler Street, Atlanta, GA 30318, www.rockstarsproduction.com

The Prodigy's RWT present **The Burn Out ball** event, 7 p.m. – 1 a.m., 1011 Fair St. Atlanta, GA 30314

A hit last fall, **"The Book Club Play,"** featuring a gay character, gets an encore run at **Horizon Theatre**, opening tonight at 8 p.m., www.horizontheatre.com

Traxx Atlanta, Skate Boyz & Live Life Loud present the **Neon Dreams/Mansion** party, with complimentary party bus drop-off and pick-up at Kroger Parking Lot, 10 p.m., 3359 Chamblee Tucker Road, Atlanta, GA 30341, www.traxxatlanta.com

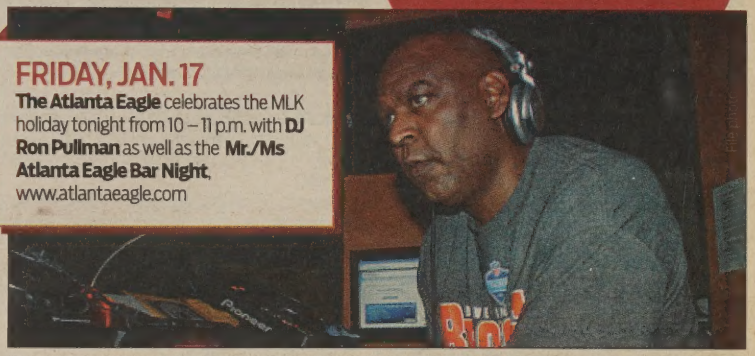
Cream Ultra Lounge and **Lucky Diamonds** presents **Elevate Fridays MLK Weekend Kickoff and Grand Hustle Birthday Bash** for **Young Dro** and **DJ MLK**, elevatefridays.eventbrite.com

FRIDAY, JAN. 17-19

The **Armorettes** celebrates its **35th anniversary** throughout the weekend and also serves as a retirement weekend for **Knomie Moore** and **Sofonda Cox**. On Friday, join the camp drag troupe for a bar crawl beginning at 8 p.m. at The **Hideaway** then 9:30 p.m. at **BJ Roosters**, 11 p.m. at **Opus** and then headed to **Bliss** at midnight. On Saturday, it's the **Armorette Follies** at the **Heretic** at 8 p.m. hosted by **Bubba Dee, Knomie Moore** and **Sofonda Cox.** This will be **Sofonda Cox's** final performance. Then the Armorettes' anniversary party at **Burkhart's** at 8 p.m. and the final performance of Knomie Moore, www.armorettes.com

FRIDAY, JAN. 17

The Atlanta Eagle celebrates the MLK holiday tonight from 10 – 11 p.m. with **DJ Ron Pullman** as well as the **Mr./Ms Atlanta Eagle Bar Night**, www.atlantaeagle.com



SOMETHING GAY EVERY DAY!

Bookmark www.thegavoice.com to get your daily dose of local LGBT events.

SATURDAY, JAN. 18

Join **Lost-N-Found Youth** as they clean up their new home for homeless youth, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., 768 Juniper Street, Atlanta, GA 30308

Create Love for Women Who Love Women presents a **workshop on DOMA** and its impact on people in Georgia with **Judge Phyllis Williams**. 10 a.m.- 12:30 p.m., donation asked is $10, **Little Five Points Community Center,** sharrongjamison@gmail.com, imani@surviving2thriving.org, www.phyllisrwilliamspc.com

The Lesbian 50+ Potluck Social brings together great company and great food, 6 - 8 p.m., **Phillip Rush Center**, www.rushcenteratl.org

Ladies At Play cranks it up at **Aurum** for MLK festivities with **DJ Deb** with no cover, tonight from 6 – 10 p.m., www.aurumlounge.com

Topher Payne's new play **"The Only Light in Reno,"** about a room filled with the likes of **Marilyn Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor** and **Montgomery Clift** one evening in 1960, continues at **Georgia Ensemble Theatre** in Roswell through January 26, 8 p.m., www.get.org

Rockstar Productions' main MLK weekend event is at the **595 Event Center,** from 10 p.m. – 3 a.m., 595 North Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30318 **Metro Fuxon** is the site for the **K.I.S.S. King Party Traxx Girls** party with **Remy V**, with doors opening at 10 p.m., www.metrofuxon.com

SUNDAY, JAN. 19

Actor's Express continues the gay-themed comedy/drama **"Six Degrees of Separation,"** directed by its artistic director **Freddie Ashley**, through Feb. 9, with a matinee performance today at 2 p.m., www.actorsexpress.com

The Icon Himself presents **"I Am, Part II, Mini Ball Deluxe,"** with a grand prize of $1,000. Doors open at 8 p.m., with a $20 cover all night, **Club Aries,** 1995 Metropolitan Parkway, Atlanta, GA 30313

Ladies At Play continues its MLK Weekend party at **Tongue and Groove**, with no cover before 11 p.m. Featuring 107.5's **DJ Silver Knight** accompanied by hot female drummer **Crystal Martin** of **Thundersnatch** and **DJ Fyre**. 10 p.m. – 2:30 a.m., www.tongueandgrooveonline.com

Rockstars Productions ends its weekend MLK festivities with **Sunday Night Live** at **Sugar Hill**, 10 p.m. – 4 a.m., 45 Bennett St., Atlanta, GA 30309, www.rockstarsproduction.com

Traxx Atlanta continues its MLK weekend event with **Men After Dark,** the **MLK After Hours Bash** with dancers from across the country, beginning at 3 a.m., **XS Ultra Lounge**, 708 Spring St., Atlanta, GA 30308, www.traxxatlanta.com

Wassup N Atl continues its MLK weekend party tonight at **Jungle Atlanta**, www.jungleatl.com, wassupnatl.com

HBO unveils its new gay-themed series **"Looking,"** about a group of gay male friends in San Francisco, directed by Andrew Haigh ("Weekend") and starring out actor Jonathan Groff of "Glee" fame, 10:30 p.m., HBO, www.hbo.com

David Knapp spins at **Xion**, located behind **Jungle**, beginning at 3 a.m., www.jungleatl.com

"Living the Dream Ball" hosted by **Mother Entyce DaVinci, Jewel Mizrahi,** and **Icon Jaimee** 007, 4 – 8 p.m., **Cream Ultra Lounge**, 3249 Buford Highway NE Atlanta, GA 30329, http://on.fb.me/1lT1uHh

MONDAY, JAN. 20

The 13th annual Bayard Rustin/Audre Lourde breakfast will be held at **All Saints Episcopal Church**. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. with breakfast served at 10 a.m. www.allsaintsatlanta.org, www.facebook.com/RustinLordeBreakfast

TUESDAY, JAN. 21

The Atlanta DINE-Out for **Muscular Dystrophy** is a benefit/community fundraiser for The **FSH Society**, raising money to help find a cure for **FacioScapuloHumeral Muscular Dystrophy** (FSH or FSHD), 6 – 10 p.m., **Yeah! Burger**, www.yeahburger.com

AID Atlanta's Gay Outreach Team discusses **One Night Stands** – and making them safe. 6:30 – 8 p.m., **Phillip Rush Center**, www.rushcenteratl.org

Publicity photo

SUNDAY, JAN. 19

Lion's Den Atlanta presents its **International Male** MLK party featuring special guest appearance by the all new cast of **"Tha Life Atlanta"** with **MC Big Daddy** and **DJ Mary Mac** spinning the beats. 10 p.m., www.facebook.com/thelionsdenatlanta

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 22

Dancer, social worker and author **Sheila K. Collins** discusses her book **"Warrior Mother: Fierce Love, Unbearable Loss and Rituals that Heal,"** dealing with her son's battle with AIDS and her daughter's fight against breast cancer, tonight at 7:30 p.m. at **Charis Books**, www.charisbooksandmore.com

Join funny man **Ian Aber** for the monthly **Abear Comedy Show**, 8 p.m., **Jungle Atlanta**, www.jungleatl.com

Wednesday nights are **Piano Night with David Reeb** at **Mixx Atlanta**, www.mixxatlanta.com

THURSDAY, JAN. 23

SAGE Atlanta hosts it monthly **Cards and Social Hour** event, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., **Phillip Rush Center,** www.rushcenteratl.org

Join **Charis** for a wild ride with some steamy stories to warm you on the coldest winter night. Smart, tough, and very sexy, these femmes will keep you on the edge of your seat. Featured performers include: **Miel Rose, Kathleen Delaney-Adams, & Francis Varian** with special guests **Adriana Chiknas** & **Asha Leong**, 7:30 – 9 p.m., **Charis Books**, www.charisbooksandmore.com

Decadence: A Night of Drinking and Debauchery, is hosted by **Adam Bland** and **Ashley Mitchell**, with beats by **DJ Daryl Cox**, beginning at 10 p.m. with a **Wet Underwear Contest** at 11 p.m., **Ten Atlanta**, www.tenatlanta.com

Trinity Bonet from "Rupaul's Drag Race" hosts **Dancefloor Divas** along with fellow performer Phoenix, 11:30 p.m., **Burkhart's**, www.burkharts.com

FRIDAY, JAN. 24

Tacos and more - the **Atlanta Gay Chamber of Commerce (AGLCC)** hosts a free **Fourth Friday** event blending socializing and networking opportunities, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., **Escorpion Tacos & Tequila**, www.urestaurants.com

The Other Show is every Friday and features such drag icons as **Edie Cheezburger**, **Violet Chachki** and **Jaye Lish**. 9 p.m., **Jungle**, www.jungleatl.com

The **Absolut Vodka**-sponsored **Ladies' Night w/ DJ Liz Owen** begins tonight at the **Upstairs Bar at Blakes**, from 10pm – close, www.blakesontheparkatlanta.com

The Divas Cabaret, starring **Destiny Brooks**, **Heather Daniels**, **lysis Dupree**, **Kitty Love** and special guests, begins at 11 p.m., with **DJ Birdman** spinning before and after, **LeBuzz**, www.thenewlebuzz.com

Get down with the boys in town, with the assistance of **DJ Headmaster**, at the **Boys Room Video Dance Party** at **Mary's**, www.marysatlanta.com

SATURDAY, JAN. 25

The bears are back – it's ***Bearracuda Night*** *at the* **Atlanta Heretic**, *with doors opening at 9 p.m.*, www.atlantaheretic.com

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BEST BETS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

The **Metro Atlanta Association of Professionals (formerly AEN)** sponsors a **Brunch N Learn** about the state **DOMA** laws, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., **Southeast Mortgage**, www.southeastmortgage.com

DJ Liz Owen anchors the **Fantasy Party** at **My Sister's Room,** with a black out party, go go dancers and live performances, www.mysistersroom.com

Atlanta's Best Dance Party featuring rising star **DJ Billy Lace** of New York City who will be making his Atlanta debut. He is a resident DJ for Winter Party in Miami, XL Nightclub in NYC and Hydrate in Chicago. 10 p.m., **Jungle**, www.jungleatl.com.

SATURDAY, JAN. 25-SUNDAY, JAN. 26.

The Deeper Love Project hosts **two days of community discussions on black gay relationships**. Each session will cover topics including monogamy, sexual relationships with no strings attached, black gay marriage, can romantic relationships work in the black gay community, and standards and deal breakers in relationships. 1 – 4 p.m. both days at **The Evolution Project**, 583 Juniper St., Atlanta, GA 30308, www.facebook.com/thedeeperloveproject

SUNDAY, JAN. 26

Lips Atlanta is the home for **Dinner With the Divas**, hosted by **Savannah Leigh** and **Stiletto**, with all sorts of celebrity impersonators. The bar opens at 6 p.m. with show at 7:45 p.m., **Lips Atlanta**, www.lipsatl.com

The Midtown Men – featuring four of the stars of the original **"Jersey Boys"** musical – bring their crooning talents to the **Cobb Energy Center** at 7 p.m., www.cobbenergycentre.org

Amy Ray of **The Indigo Girls** sings from her new country album **"Goodnight Tender"** tonight at 8 p.m. at **Variety Playhouse**, with **Heather McEntire of Mount Moriah** opening, www.varietyplayhouse.org

Publicity photo

FRIDAY, JAN. 24

Lesbian faves **Halcyon** – "the girls with guitars" – visit **Eddie's Attic** at 10 p.m., www.eddiesattic.com

Featuring talents of all facets, the queer variety show **Sweet Tea** has comedy, drag, live music, slam poetry, queer performance art and more, featuring **Cleopatra Grace Jones**, **Ray Leota**, **Patrick Snipes**, **Jasmine Kevea Green** and more acts to be announced, hosted by, and including a performance by, **Taylor Alxndr** and **DJ PK Fire**, 9 p.m., **Noni's**, http://www.nonisdeli.com/

MONDAY, JAN. 27

Moral Monday GA Day at the Capitol: Tell the Gov. & Ga. lawmakers to 'Stop Putting Our Schools on Shoestring Budgets!' **EmpowerED Georgia Action** is partnering with **FACE It Cobb - Funding Awareness Campaign for Education for a Day at the Capitol** at 9 a.m. in Room 216. Please wear green and bring some shoestrings, www.shoestringcampaign.com.

TUESDAY, JAN. 28

It's finally here! The Tony-winning sensation **"The Book of Mormon,"** by the creators of "South Park," makes its long-awaited Atlanta debut. It's a musical comedy about two Mormon missionaries who visit Uganda and try unsuccessfully to spread the scriptures, 8 p.m., **Fox Theatre**, http://www.foxtheatre.org/

Fourth Tuesdays gathers at **Henry's in Midtown** for its monthly dinner. Cocktails and mingling begins at 6 p.m. with dinner served from 7 – 9 p.m. All lesbian, transgender and bisexual women are welcome, www.thehealthinitiative.org/programs-resources/programming/fourth-tuesday

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 29

LeBuzz starts its new **M4M HardBody Revue** with a cash award, 9 p.m., www.thenewlebuzz.com

The Atlanta Jewish Film Festival gets underway at venues throughout the area, with various queer programming such as **Eytan Fox's comic "Cupcakes,"** various times and locations. Tonight's opening night is at the **Cobb Energy Centre** at 7 p.m., www.ajff.org

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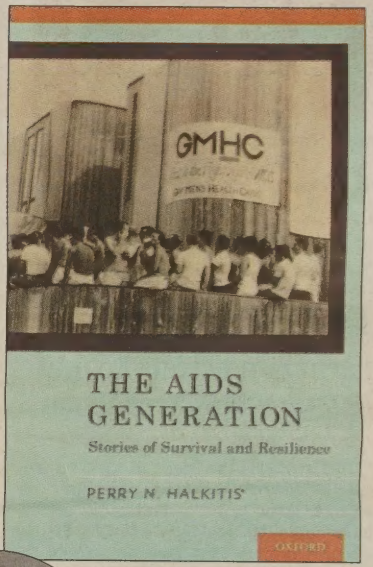
BOOKS BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

'AIDS Generation' survivors share bond

New book chronicles lives of middle-aged men who lived through pandemic



Some of the best experiences you had last year were with your friends.

When you think back about the highlights, you remember dancing together, eating together, late-night bull sessions, parties, travels and idle man-watching. Those shared experiences are the glue that forever hold your friendship together.

Or maybe, like the men in "The AIDS Generation" by Perry N. Halkitis, your bond is that you're survivors.

The history of AIDS is vast and can't be told without the stories of the people lost to the disease and the ones they left behind. Of the latter, says Halkitis, "... all the gay men of my generation, infected or not, are long-term survivors ..."

Those are the men who came of age in the 1980s when "the promise for sexual freedom and sexual expression existed..." They are the men who, in the prime of their lives and when they should've been the picture of health, watched their friends and lovers die and who were told, upon their own AIDS diagnosis, that they, too, would probably be dead within two years.

Perry N. Halkitis, author of 'The AIDS Generation,' tells the stories of long-term survivors. (Publicity photo)

But of course, that wasn't necessarily true. This book, the culmination of a large-scale project on gay men who have lived with AIDS for decades, pulls together 15 survivors who were "still alive to tell their stories as middle-aged men."

Some of them don't remember when they learned of their diagnosis, while some remember the day clearly. Regardless, all exhibited "the pause," as Halkitis calls the stress reaction to remembering that time.

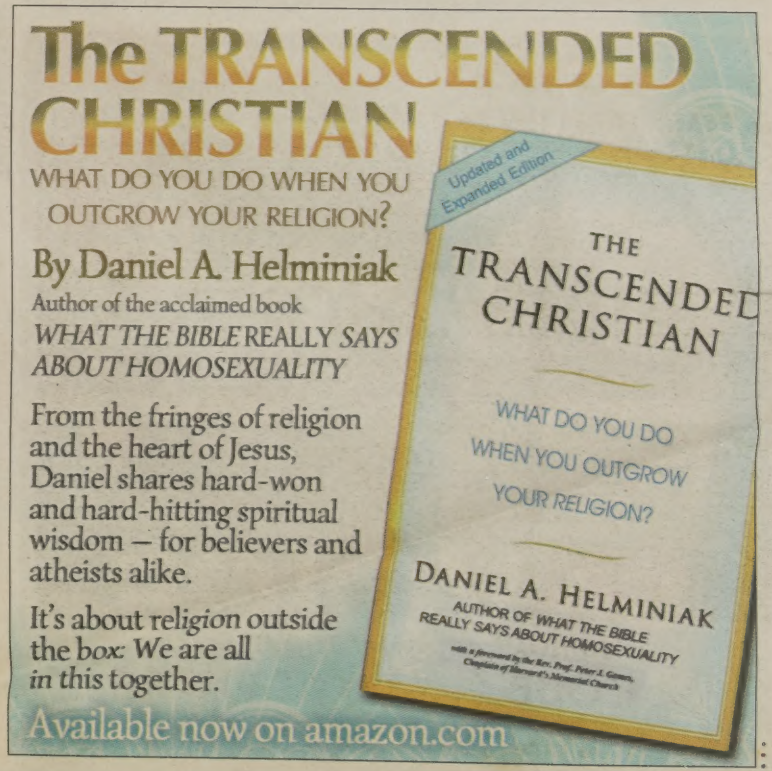
Some of the 15 knew, deep-down, that they'd been infected; one said it would've been "a miracle...not to be positive." For others, it came as a surprise. Some got sick, while others waited for illness that never really came. All are "resilient," says Halkitis, and are now surprised and amazed to experience the kind of normal health issues that men in middle-age endure.

"I've been at the worst of this virus," one of the men told Halkitis, "and now I'm in the golden years of this virus. This virus has taken me halfway around the world, and I'm still here."

At first blush, "The AIDS Generation" may seem like it's more academic than not. That assessment is true; there is plenty for academics in this book, but casual readers will find something here, too.

As one of the "AIDS Generation," author Perry N. Halkitis knew, specifically, which questions to ask of his subjects in order to get the memories and emotions he pulled from them. That questioning leads to a fresh sense of heartache in the telling of tales, and a distant theme of horror that bubbles with anger and ends with a general awe for life and an appealing sense of triumph. Despite linguistic stumbles that might've been better off edited out, that makes them compellingly readable.

I believe there are two audiences for this book: long-term survivors who count themselves among the warriors, and younger men who need to learn. If you fall into either category, then reading "The AIDS Generation" will be a worthwhile experience.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MELISSA CARTER

THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID

Melissa Carter is currently one of the Morning Show hosts on B98.5. In addition, she is a writer for Huffington Post. She is recognized as one of the first out radio personalities in Atlanta and one of only a few in the country. Follow her on Twitter @MelissaCarter

Straight from the horse's mouth

Farm family votes to quit listening because I'm gay

Jeff answered the phone in the B98.5 studio the other morning, during which the caller asked to speak to our producer. Once Jeremy picked up the line I could see his frustration grow as he listened to whatever lengthy story the listener was telling him. He ended the conversation by slamming the phone on the receiver and continuing his work. Jeff and I asked what made him so angry, and Jeremy explained that the listener and his family had just taken a vote to stop listening to our show. The reason? I was gay.

This listener was apparently tending horses in a barn with 14 members of his family that morning and heard me talk about my girlfriend, which prompted "the vote." After the call, Jeff and Jeremy spent the next few minutes discussing how offended they were at hatred towards gay people. Mind you, I was not part of that conversation, since I was unaffected by the call and continued with my work. But to hear these straight guys genuinely disappointed in homophobia was refreshing. They also called the listener a coward for not talking to me directly. I must agree.

I have been fortunate in my decades-long radio career in Atlanta to rarely experience prejudice for being a lesbian. People are amazed when I tell them I have never received a piece of hate mail for that reason. Usually listeners get bent out of shape because I'm an opinionated female on the mic, having nothing to do with my sexuality.

There are other positive signs of acceptance in media. "Good Morning America" anchor Robin Roberts came out on Facebook, thanking her long-time girlfriend Amber Laign. She then talked about her on GMA, showing a picture of them at a family wedding. First Lady Michelle Obama took to social media to tell Roberts how happy she was for her, adding, "You continue to make us all proud."

Two former members of the Houston Oilers recently told the Houston Chronicle there were gay members on the 1993 team. They were called "unbelievable teammates" by Lamar Lathon, and Cris Dishman said having gay players in the locker room was "no big deal."

During the Tournament of Roses parade over the holiday, a gay marriage took place on the AIDS Healthcare Foundation wedding cake float. While watching coverage of the parade on HGTV, I noticed their coverage of the groundbreaking float was no different than that of any of the other floats. Nancy O'Dell even made a point to congratulate Aubrey Loots and Danny Leclair.

I like stupid humor, so I also have to mention the gay parody of "The Bachelor" that was posted on "Funny or Die," starring Jesse Tyler Ferguson and hosted by George Takei. Being able to make fun of things can be cathartic too.

It's human nature to want to be liked. Of course I hate the idea that a group of people spent time in a barn criticizing my life, and actually held a vote on turning the dial so they didn't have to hear me talk anymore. Even more, I hate the idea that one of those family members was gay, in the closet, and realized in that moment their family would never love them.

But that's not what I focus on. For one phone call that says my gayness should not be on the airwaves there are scores of others who support me and my family, including the two men I share a studio with every morning. Love really is stronger than hate, if you allow it to be. Those who are angry and exclusionary have their own demons that got them to that place, and I leave them to that struggle. Enjoying the people around you is much more relaxing, and doesn't end in slamming the phone to end a disturbing conversation.

RYAN LEE

SOMETIMES 'Y'

A bloodless revolution

The unfortunate potential for gay rights at Sochi games

Ryan Lee is an Atlanta writer.

Less than a month before the start of the Winter Games, Russian President Vladimir Putin has emerged as the most sinister Olympic villain since Tonya Harding.

Having spent the last decade clubbing his country with vintage totalitarianism, the Russian dictator is eager to impress the rest of the world with his revived empire. Awarding the 2014 Games to Sochi is what one would expect from an entity with the moral reputation of the International Olympic Committee, whose legacy on human rights includes embracing Hitler on the eve of World War II and expelling African-American athletes who became ambassadors of the Civil Rights movement in 1968.

However, as a sports fan and sentimentalist, my instinct was to oppose the idea of boycotting the games, despite Russia's grotesque campaign against LGBT life and culture. Specifically, I defer to the athletes who have committed their lives to achieving rarified excellence, and I generally doubt the effectiveness of boycotts that are exclusively passive.

Like any self-respecting Reality TV junkie, I adore Andy Cohen; and the ensuing criticism is couched with the privilege of a gay writer who has never been invited to judge a beauty pageant in one of the most homophobic countries on earth. Still, I was disappointed when I heard that the Bravo execu-queen was protesting Russia's anti-LGBT crackdown by not attending the Miss Universe pageant in Moscow last summer.

No gay Russian was protected, no solidarity shown nor progress gained, by the missed opportunity for one of the most flamboyant (and culturally powerful) gay men in America to prance through Red Square in defiance of Putin's violent ignorance. Cohen's mere existence qualifies as "gay propaganda," and his presence in Russia would have been a powerful test of the Russo determination to eradicate "non-traditional sexual relations."

In a few weeks, LGBT Olympians from across the globe, as well as the U.S. delegation to Sochi appointed by President Obama, will help us all understand the Russian government's sincerity in prohibiting any and all positive expressions of homosexuality. I continue to believe that Putin is too clever a tyrant to showcase his country's bigotry for an international audience.

If he is not, or if Russian vigilantes defend their homophobic laws by attacking LGBT protestors, it may be a necessary moment in gay rights history.

For a movement that started with a weekend of rioting, ours has been a remarkably bloodless revolution. There have been generations of war launched by more subtle requests than asking God to revise his position on abominations, but the accelerated success of the Gay Rights movement in America has occurred without the violence characteristic of human rights uprisings.

Without question, there has been ghastly violence inflicted upon individual LGBT Americans in the 45 years since Stonewall and long before, and there remain too many places in our world where any expression of homosexuality or gender variance is a death sentence.

And in reality, two men holding hands are as likely to be attacked walking down most of the streets in Georgia as they are in Sochi, Russia. Our inclusion in sitcom casts and victories with marriage equality can make us — and heterosexuals — forget about the enduring threat faced by those who are too much of themselves in the wrong place where it's always the wrong time.

I wish martyrdom on no one and abhor all violence. But it's hard for me to imagine a vodka boycott or online petition motivating the world to eliminate its violent opposition to LGBT human beings. I yearn to show solidarity with Jamaicans, Russians, Ugandans, Nigerians and the many LGBT populations that live in endless peril.

I believe we can do so by committing to making sure that our homeland is as safe to LGBT individuals as we say that we wish theirs could be. Yet, I have lacked the courage to sit intimately beside another man on a MARTA train or exchange kisses on the platform the way the young straight couple did.

Our presence in our communities is as important as LGBT athletes being in Sochi, and I am cheering for their — and our — safety and triumph.

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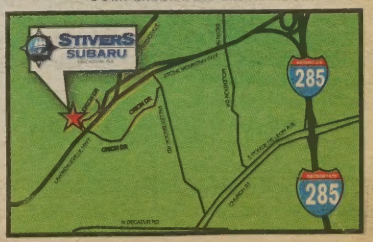

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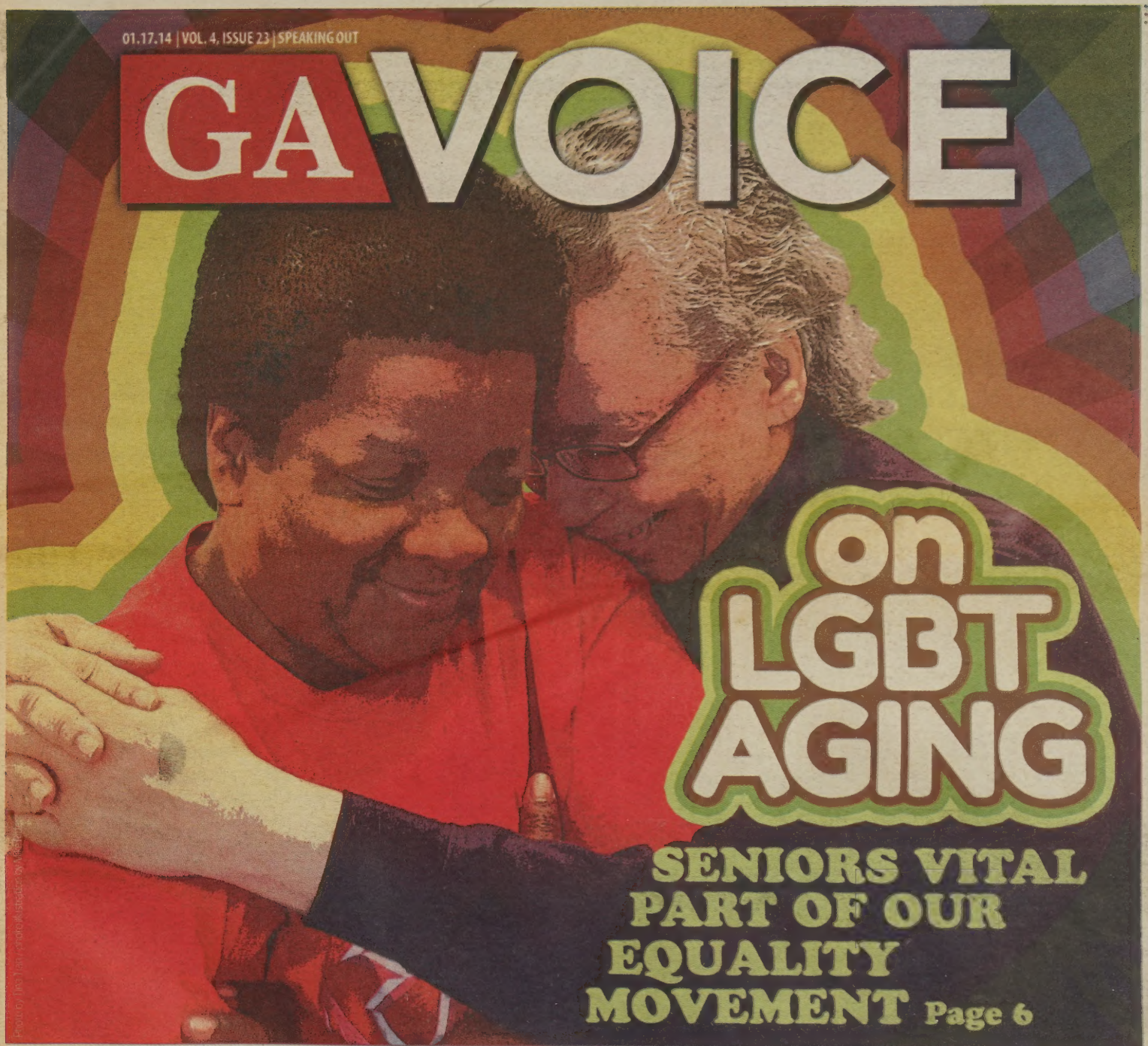

on LGBT AGING

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Rustin-Lorde Breakfast honors legacies **Page 13**

'Book of Mormon'
Award-winning musical comes to the ATL **Page 19**

Best Bets
No excuse not to get out of the house **Page 22**

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OUTSPOKEN

FRIENDS & FOES IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"LGBQ participants are more generally positive about, and happier with, the quality of their relationship and the relationship which they have with their partner [than heterosexuals]."

— From study of 5,000 people over two years funded by the UK's Economic and Science Research Council (The Independent, Jan. 14)

"Good evening to everyone in the audience and to all the women and gay men watching at home."

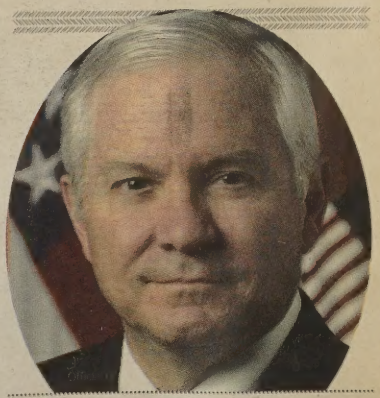
—**Amy Poehler**, opening the 71st Annual Golden Globe Awards with co-host **Tina Fey.** (NBC, Jan. 12)

"I am disappointed in the judge's ruling and troubled that the will of the people has once again been ignored by the federal government."

— Oklahoma Governor **Mary Fallin** released in a statement regarding Judge Terence C. Kern's ruling striking down the state's ban on same-sex marriage. (Towleroad.com, Jan. 14)

"[M]oral disapproval of homosexuals as a class, or same-sex marriage as a practice, is not a permissable justification for a law."

—United States District Judge Terence C. Kern, in his written opinion striking down Oklahoma's constitutional ban on same-sex marriage as a violation of the 14th Amendment. (*Bishop v. Oklahoma*, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma, Jan. 14)



"The only military matter, apart from leaks, about which I ever sensed deep passion on [Obama's] part was 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,'"

—Defense Secretary **Robert Gates** saying in his new book,"Duty" that he was blindsided by President Obama's announcement that he would repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

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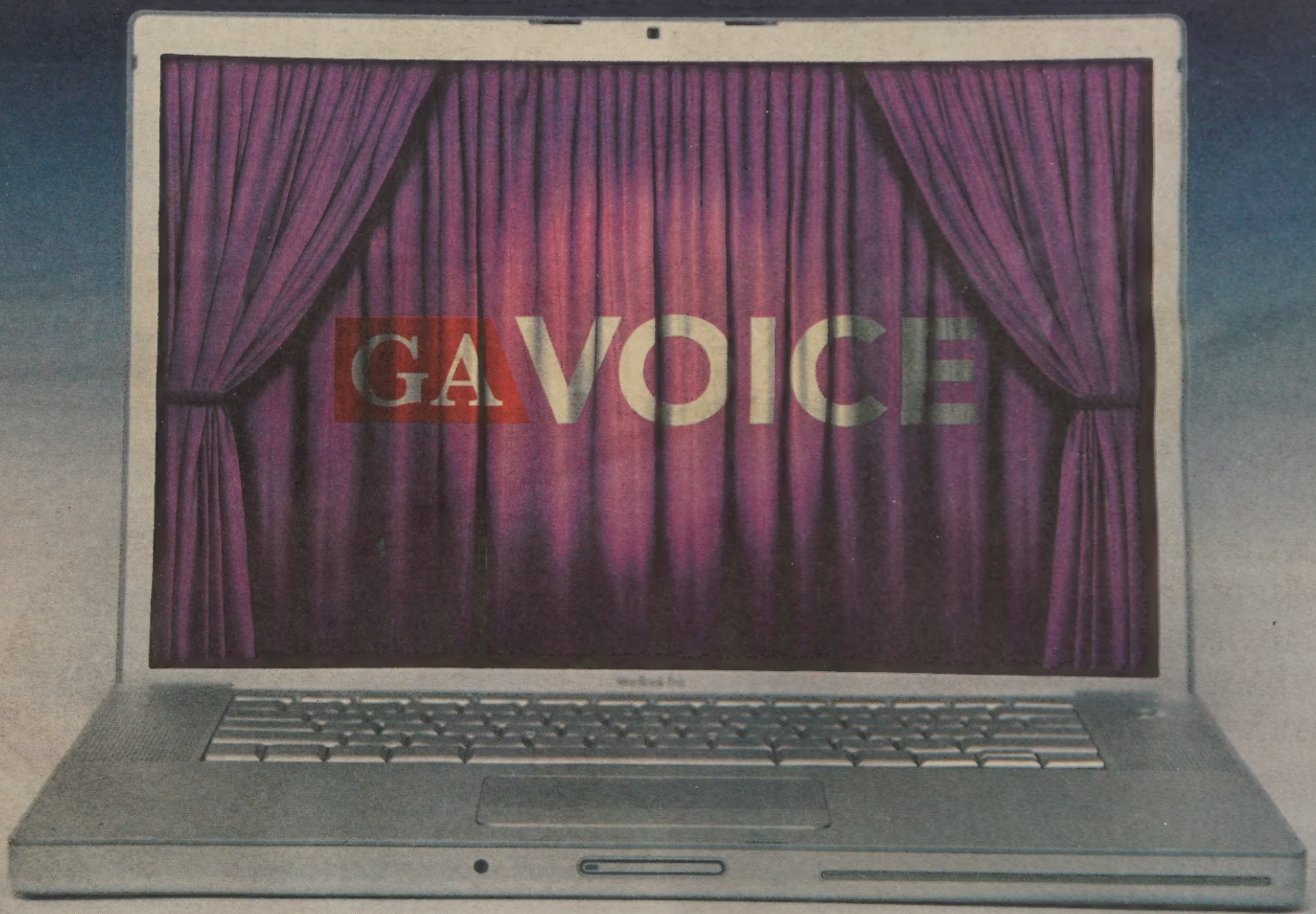


Premiering January 2014

'Everyone is not 20'

Support of family, each other keeps love alive for Pat and Cherry Hussain

By DYANA BAGBY

Nearly 30 years ago, Pat Hussain was touring the Toys R Us in Huntsville, Ala., where she was going to be the new store director when a woman jumped between the men in suits and reached out her hand.

She said her name was Cherry. "And you're going to love me," Pat recalls her saying.

Three decades later, including a marriage in Connecticut in 2009, and the love definitely flows between the two as they cuddle on their couch, playing with their two dogs, on a recent rainy Saturday morning.

"I was married to a man with two kids. But I fell in love at first sight with her," Cherry says. "And I'm just arrogant," she adds with a laugh. "I have style, class and charisma."

Pat, 64, and Cherry, 59, have pretty much been together since that fateful assignment. While Pat enjoyed playing the field and had a girlfriend in Atlanta, she was taken with this confident, sassy woman who was fearless in making her intentions known.

"I thought, oh, she's going to eat those words," Pat, who enjoyed playing the field, says of Cherry's forwardness.

"This cutie comes after the predator. I had roaming feet when we met. I didn't know she had that spark in her. She was a married woman with two children — that's definitely a no-no. But I could not resist a challenge," Pat says with a laugh. "She had thrown down the gauntlet."

There were the valid worries of being lesbians in a small-town and when Cherry divorced her abusive husband, she lost custody of her children because a judge believed her to be too immoral to raise them.

The children eventually moved back in with Pat and Cherry when they got older, escaping the abuse he wrought on them after their mother was gone, and the two have been co-parenting for years and are also now grandparents.

"The thing that has been difficult for us has been family. Theres a perception that what's visible in our community is young, single people. But that's not the whole truth," says Pat. "Without the advances in meds, there'd be a lot fewer of us around. Each year is a treasure. Everyone is not 20."

'I GOT MY HEART AND HEAD BROKEN'

Pat was one of the co-founders of the grassroots "Olympics Out of Cobb" movement in 1994 that forced Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games' to move the 1996 Olympic volleyball competitions out of Cobb County in response to the Cobb Board of Commissioners approving a resolution condemning the "gay lifestyle."

The pressure was so mighty that the OOCC, with the help of such groups as ACT UP, the Lesbian Avengers, Dykes & Faggots Bash Back, and the Human Rights Campaign also succeeded in ensuring the Olympic torch did not pass through Cobb County. That anti-gay resolution is still on the books, however.

Hussain was also a co-founder of Southerners on New Ground, a group that works to fight for equality on behalf of rural LGBT people, and she spent all her time organizing and fighting for equality. Until she just couldn't fight anymore.

"I got my heart broken and my head broken," Pat says. "I want to do social justice work so much and it so painful. You think you're tough, you're an organizer."

But before the start of a SONG conference, Pat's body simply quit working and she eventually was hospitalized.

"I claimed a front row seat in hell and I hope I never have to there again," she says.

The breakdown meant Pat had to quit working and the loss of Pat's income some years ago has taken a deep toll on the couple. Pat also has withdrawn much from any community activity but receives help from ZAMI NOBLA, an organization specifically serves black lesbians who are 40 and older, as well as close friends.

Cherry works at a grocery store and is the sole source of income. But she says she would do

on LGBT AGING

Pat and **Cherry Hussain** have been together 28 years after meeting in Huntsville, Ala. As they get older, they face physical and emotional difficulties and seek support from community. (Photos by Tina Tian)

anything to care for her wife.

"My wife suffers from depression, from PTSD. It was so horrifying for me," Cherry says. "To watch this beautiful, emotional, vibrant hummingbird full of sunshine and song who is now afraid. It was a challenge and still is a challenge. Sometimes the days are sunny, others are cloudy. I'm just glad my wife has me. She could have disappeared, she could have been homeless. But she is still the bright light of my love."

ATLANTA DREAM INSPIRES

Aging, for anyone, is a challenge, emotionally and physically. Cherry just had bones in her knees replaced.

"My knees knees feel good but the rest of me is still getting old. Work is one area — as we get older we're not able to do the jobs we used to do. It's a challenge to keep up at work and then they take your pay and you stress about that," she says. "My only challenge is getting up every morning and making sure my wife still loves me."

After seeing psychiatrists and therapists, Hussain found an outlet that puts the spark back in her soul — the Atlanta Dream, the city's professional women's basketball team. The season tickets are expensive, especially on one income, but Cherry, a former player and coach, say it is money well spent.

"My wife gets excited, I get excited. I don't care how much it costs. She comes out of her shell. She wants to go," Cherry says.

Of course SONG has never let Pat and Cherry go and continue to support the couple. But the Atlanta Dream, well, those women dribbling and shooting and winning games are a strong source of inspiration.

"After all the therapists and psychiatrists and drugs, the thing that made the biggest different to me is the Atlanta Dream," Pat says. "Therapy trough basketball. It's cheaper!"

NOT ALL 'WHITE GAY, MOSTLY MALE'

Pat and Cherry are still socially conscious even if they are not able to physically participate as often as they would like. And Pat still is keenly interested in the LGBT movement and the intersection of all oppressions — because gay people are not only discriminated by not being allowed to get married in Georgia or other states, but they are discriminated against when seeking housing or jobs or by federal immigration laws.

One way to help the movement, and all social justice movements, work well together is for the people who are fighting the good fight to get to know each other.

"We're doing some very difficult work without knowing each other," Pat says. "And that creates more tension. We're not understanding each other. I am so glad to have queer folk on TV, in the media.

"But that's just one aspect of under 30, white gay, mostly male," Pat adds. "Not to disparage a Wanda Sykes who is out there, but there has been two approaches in our [LGBT] community — one is to say, 'Look, I'm just like you.' And the other is to work to change and reorder the way that table and say I'm not trying to regain a seat at the table where I wasn't invited and am not welcome."

HOLDING HANDS 30 YEARS LATER

Nearly 30 years ago, when Cherry boldly introduced herself to Pat in a small-town Alabama Toys R Us store, neither thought they would be holding hands on a couch in the home they share near Decatur. They still hold hands when they go to sleep. As a way to deal with her depression, Pat writes poems. She quotes one of her favorites, "Our hands touch in bed/one palm facing the other/ a nest of fingers."

And for Cherry, words matter in how she talks to her wife.

"I don't tell her I love tell her. I say I'm in love with her,"she says.

Plenty of fight left

Atlanta Vietnam vet recalls battling inner conflict over sexuality

By PATRICK SAUNDERS

Lucius Harwell, 67, a board member of Atlanta's Galano Club, struggles today with health issues he says were caused from being exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. At right, Harwell, 26, in 1972. (Courtesy photos)

on LGBT AGING

Lucius Harwell greets me with an oxygen tank and a smile.

The 67-year-old Cartersville native meets me at Galano Club, the LGBT 12-step meeting spot in Midtown. He's a Galano board member and comes here almost every day.

When people in AA meetings talk about what is going on in their life, they call it "sharing." So Galano is as good a place as any for us to talk. We grab an empty meeting room and Harwell proceeds to share his life.

Harwell has been attracted to both men and women for most of his life, and he dated "some very pretty girls" in high school and college. But it wasn't as easy to address the other side of his feelings.

"I didn't like it," he tells GA Voice. "I hated myself. You were such a pariah if you were gay, so I didn't want to be gay."

But he was honest enough with himself not to take a chance at ruining a girl's life. He was engaged to be married to a woman in his senior year of college. The wedding date was set. But Harwell wasn't.

"I had to tell her. I couldn't say 'gay,' but I did muster up 'bisexual,'" he says. "She's a beautiful, sweet person. Still is." She was the first person he came out to.

Soon after, Harwell's inner conflict would manifest itself thanks to another conflict much farther away.

'THIS IS WHAT YOU'LL BE LIVING WITH'

In the fall of 1970, Harwell showed up at the U.S. Army induction center on Ponce de Leon Avenue at what is now Ford Factory Lofts. His draft number was up, and he had no qualms about serving—even though his sexuality could have gotten him out of it.

But with a father that served in the Navy and a brother that had been in the Air National Guard, it wasn't a consideration.

"A lot of my friends said, 'Oh just tell them you're gay' but I didn't think it was right," he says. "I wouldn't honor my family by doing something like that. To me it was not being a man."

He was stationed at Fort Jackson in Savannah for basic training, when one morning he was called to battalion headquarters and given orders to go to Vietnam. "I was looking forward to seeing more of the earth," he says. He was 26.

But on a 30-day leave back home before shipping out, his secret came out into the open.

One day, Harwell's mother went through his things and stumbled across a love letter from another man. "All hell broke loose," Harwell says.

He left for Vietnam without telling his parents goodbye, which hurt his father, because he was more accepting than Harwell's mother. It was at this point that Harwell decided he was going to be straight.

When Harwell's captain found out he wasn't writing home to his mother, he ordered him to do so. It didn't go well.

"This was about the time that Jim Nabors and Rock Hudson were supposedly boyfriends," he says. "She clipped that article out of the Enquirer, sent it to me and said, 'See, this is what you'll be living with.'"

He managed to "stay straight" for a few months, before a former rival became something altogether new and different.

'WE SWORE UNDYING LOVE FOR EACH OTHER'

His name was Dan.

He and Harwell had gotten into a fight about one thing or another, but right before Dan was about to ship out, he slipped a note underneath Harwell's door apologizing...and admitting he had feelings for him.

"I tore off down to his room and we spent the next three days together," Harwell says. They wrote each other after Dan returned home to Ohio. Harwell was going to Hawaii with a couple of friends and Dan's 21st birthday was coming up during the same time, so he sent him a plane ticket.

"That's when we swore undying love for each other," Harwell says chuckling. "I couldn't wait to get out [of Vietnam]."

He moved in with Dan as soon as he got out of the service. They told people they were stepbrothers. "This was the 70s. You couldn't be out," he says.

They moved to Florida together and started a business. But a change in location didn't

Lucius Harwell (left) in Vietnam, age 26. Friends told him to say he was gay to get out of being drafted, but he refused.

change people's mindsets. "Very few people knew the truth," he says. "When we told a few people, they turned on us. It just wasn't healthy being gay yet."

As time went on, the relationship soured. Harwell was co-dependent. Dan was drinking too much. It ended. They were together for 14 years.

Harwell's mother passed away around the same time, and he came back to Georgia. He sold the home she left him and moved to Atlanta in 1988 for a fresh start.

'I DON'T HUNT FOR A DEFINITION ANY LONGER'

Harwell started going to AA meetings in Atlanta to deal with his addiction issues. It was there that he met the first person he had known who had HIV/AIDS. "I was more scared of being around someone with AIDS than I was being in Vietnam," he says. "We just didn't understand it yet."

He counts the number of friends he's lost to the disease at over 200. He couldn't stand anymore funerals. He had survivor's guilt.

As he grew older, Harwell started thinking about having a family. About having grandchildren. There were no men in his life to fill the bill, so Harwell married a woman.

"Some people have said, 'Oh that's just so wrong of you,'" he says. "I'm growing old and I don't want to grow old without family. It gives me a sense of responsibility." He considers her grandchildren his grandchildren. He and his wife live apart.

When asked if he dates, Harwell hesitates before answering. "I have friends, I go to movies," he says. "I'm true to my marriage though. I don't believe in divorce. That goes back to my parents."

"Am I defined as strictly being gay? I don't like that. You can define yourself in so many different ways. I don't really hunt for a definition any longer," he says.

He's going through therapy right now at the Atlanta VA Medical Center, dealing with what he calls "A lot of 'Who am I's?'"

When he goes out socially, he is typically the oldest one in the group. "Most people my age bore the hell out of me," he says. "They turn into little old ladies."

He looks back on his time in Vietnam fondly, with one major exception. "They sprayed me with Agent Orange, which has shortened my life," he says. "Everything that's going wrong with me physically is due to that." He has type 2 diabetes. Peripheral neuropathy which has left no feeling in most of his torso and legs. The COPD that requires him to cart the oxygen tank around on bad days, which have been more frequent lately.

"I loved serving my country, but they didn't have to poison me."

'DON'T BE A DOORMAT TO THE WORLD'

Regardless of his health issues and the bumps in the road along the way, Harwell is grateful. He's been battle-tested in more ways than one, especially when it comes to discrimination.

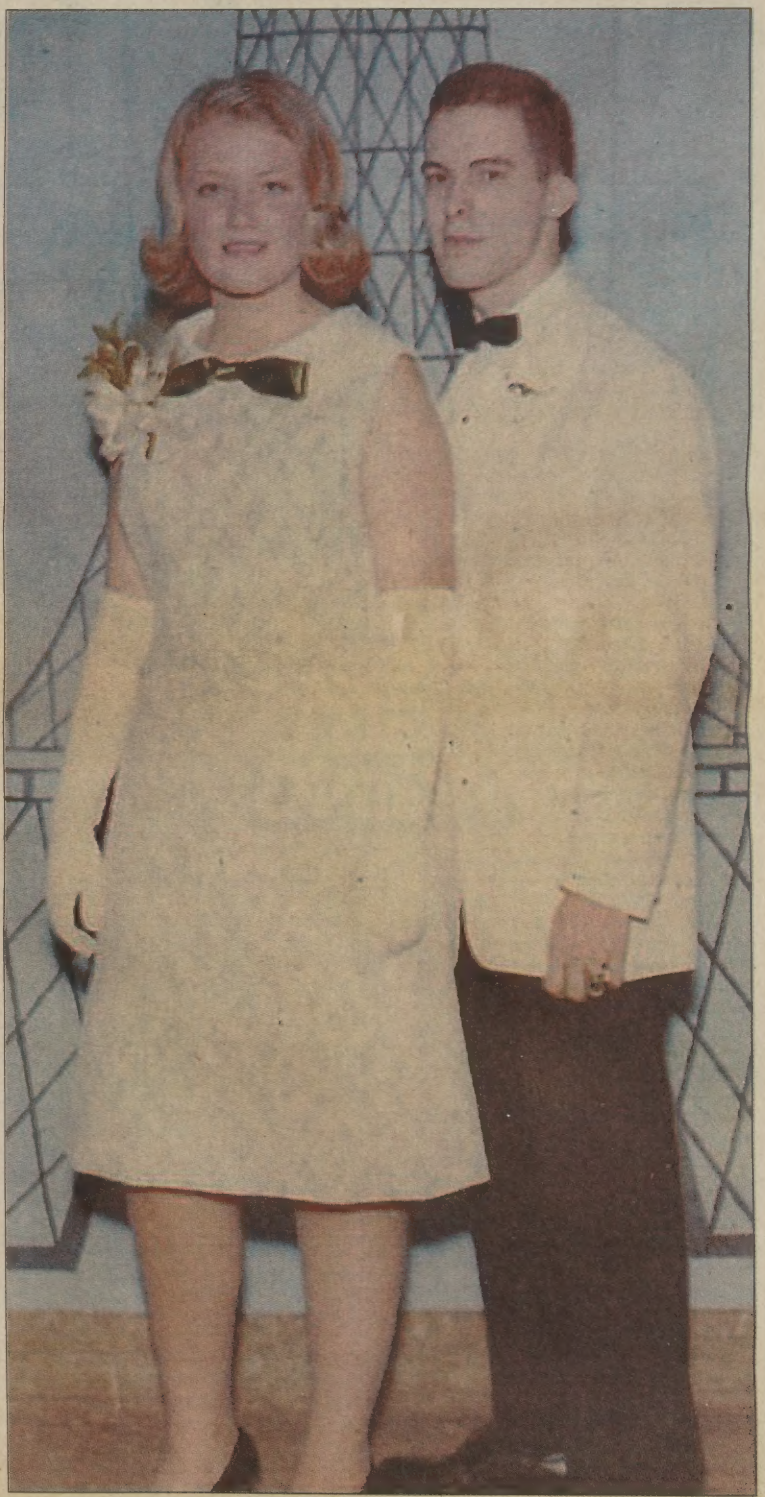
"I've ridden on the back of the bus at one time in my life," he says. "Then I got to ride up front. I've learned that I'm just as good as anyone else. I don't need to hide the fact that I think differently."

And he's not afraid to say what he thinks. He says there's no such thing as gay marriage, just marriage. He doesn't want gay rights, he wants equal rights. We shouldn't attach the word "gay" to everything, he says.

He believes in God but has no time for organized religion, which he says has caused the suffering of too many children who were a little different. He doesn't like how different subsections of the LGBT community are being split up by race.

And what advice would he give the 20-year-old Lucius? The one who hadn't come out yet? The one who had yet to fall in love? The one who survived a war, an epidemic and an addiction?

"Listen more than talk. Always be true to who you are. Don't be a doormat to the world. Stand up for your friends. Enjoy life every day."



Lucius Harwell in 1964, age 18, at his junior/senior high school prom.

Forever in love

Interracial gay couple credits tough times for strengthening relationship

By DYANA BAGBY

Above, **Bailey Conaway** (left) and **Barry Hamon** shortly after they first met in 1966. Left, Barry Hamon and Bailey Conaway after they were married in August to celebrate their 47th anniversary. (Courtesy photos)

On LGBT AGING

They met the third Thursday of July 1966 in Baltimore, Md.

Barry Hamon was running up the steps for a job interview and the boss who was seeking a new employee was at the top of the stairs waiting.

"I still remember that day clearly. I saw this gorgeous young thing literally running up the stairs. He was wearing a checkered shirt. I fell in lust right away," says Bailey Conaway, 78, with a laugh.

That man in the checkered shirt and the man who was hired to be Conaway's secretary because he was the only person able to keep up with Conaway's demanding, but fair, work ethic is Homan, 67.

"Bailey was 30, I was 19, a country bumpkin from Pennsylvania, and Bailey was a part of the big city life," Hamon says.

Conaway hired Hamon and then asked him out to dinner that night, but Hamon politely declined. When Conaway returned from a two-week vacation, he asked him out again. Hamon accepted.

"He brought me this expensive bottle of cologne from that trip. I still have it and you can still get a whiff of the scent," Hamon says.

"I grew up in town where no black people. He was so warm. So sweet. So hot looking. I was intrigued.

I thought his is going to work out fine. I couldn't get enough of him," Hamon says. "He was very intelligent and did not play games. I liked that a lot."

And that first meeting led to love for almost five decades.

In August, they drove from their Snellville home back to Maryland where they met to get legally married on their 47th anniversary.

"We got married in Howard County and went to the courthouse where I worked on occasion," says Hamon, who is a former of court reporter. "And we had an absolute wonderful experience. The clerks, the policemen were all great. How things have changed."

It is a much different time for the couple. Conaway, who is black, and Hamon, who is white, were met with much resistance from anti-gay and racist people in Maryland at the beginning of their relationship in a time when gay people, and black people, were hated by a majority of people.

When they bought a home on the outskirts of the big city in the late 1960s, the KKK showed up in their white robes and burned a cross on their lawn. But even when they went to a gay bar in Florida not too many years ago, a bouncer would not let Conaway into the bar although his other friends and husband walked in with no problem. They were at another gay bar when a man jumped in front of Conaway and made aping noises and gestures as he left.

"We've not had a great deal of acceptance from either of our families and have had to deal with bigotry our entire lives, against us being gay, against me being black," Conaway says.

"Largely it's been two of us against the world. And I think that's one of the reasons we have such a strong relationship. We work our problems out with raw honesty and mutual respect."

'I KNEW IT WAS IMPORTANT'

As a child, Conaway spent a lot of time at his grandparents' home who lived down the street from Thurgood Marshall. Marshall successfully argued the Brown v. Board of Education case and would go on to become the first black person appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1967. Conaway played with Marshall's grandchildren and knew the adults were discussing serious issues.

"I didn't understand what all was going on but I knew it was important," Conaway says.

Conaway's father and stepfather abused his mother,

"People on both sides of my family were well-educated and had money, but we're talking about black folks good money — they earned it by teaching, practicing medicine, law. It was very difficult though because my mom was, excuse the language, the 'black sheep' of the family. She was the only one who didn't go to college of six children," Conaway says.

Conaway excelled in school, graduating from high school when he was 16 and then Morgan University. He spent a couple years in the U.S. Navy and had plans to become a clinical psychologist. His career steered into a different direction and he did a lot of psychological consulting for the federal government before he took a job with the Department of Health in Baltimore.

That led to a job that was part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty — a federal department dedicated to serving elderly Americans and responding to their needs. This program became the basis for what we now know as home health aid, Conaway says. When this federal grant was up, Conaway was hired to become department head of the Maryland health department — the first black person to earn the title.

And, Conaway stresses, hiring Hamon was not nepotism. His experience as a court reporter made him the best qualified person to accurately transcribe important document and testimony.

During this time, Bailey also hired a social worker, a white woman named Barbara Mikulski. She is now a U.S. Senator for Maryland.

ON A 20-YEAR HONEYMOON

Hamon's upbringing was vastly different. He grew up in a small town in Pennsylvania and decided to move to Maryland after he graduated from high school to go to a court reporter school a friend told him about.

Before he left, though, he worked at a shoe factory and a book company. He also fell in love with the neighbor boy.

"He was not gay. He had a hard, disturbed life and he liked the attention I showed him. But he was never going to fall in love with me. I knew if I ever wanted anything else I had to go somewhere else," Hamon says.

To pay for court reporting school, Hamon worked for an elderly antiques dealer who did appraisals of rare paintings. "He put a price on priceless objects," Hamon says.

When the antiques dealer died, Hamon needed another job. He went to an agency and the woman said she knew the perfect person.

"He's demanding but fair," she told him. And that led to Hamon and Conaway meeting nearly 50 years ago.

The two have rented a condo in a Naples, Fla., retirement complex. There they still deal with sideway glances and glares from racist and homophobic people. But they have also made friends as well. As long as they have each other, they say, their lives are completely fulfilled.

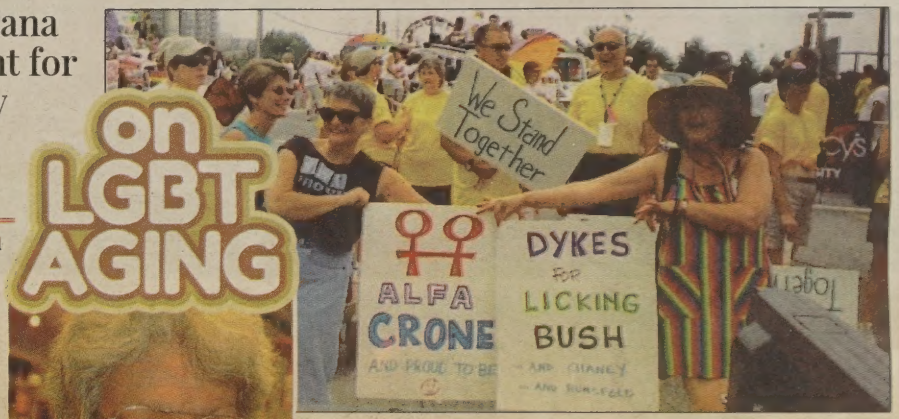
"When we got married, someone asked us if we were going on a honeymoon. We told them we've been on our honeymoon for 20 years," says Conaway.

'We are still part of the movement'

Lorraine Fontana continues fight for social equality after 40 years

ON LGBT AGING

By DYANA BAGBY



The Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance formed in 1972 and was made up of many activist women targeted during the 'Lavender Menace.'

Lorraine Fontana, 66, has been a part of Atlanta's LGBT movement (and many other social justice movements) for some four decades. (Courtesy photos)

Lorraine Fontana, 66, moved to Atlanta 46 years ago with the VISTA program as part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. She worked in the housing projects of West End as well as with those living in Cabbagetown, helping residents organize for a better quality of life.

She really hasn't slowed down since then.

As a former paralegal for the Atlanta-based Lambda Legal office, Fontana continues to ensure the voices of older LGBT people are heard in all progressive movements — Occupy Atlanta, immigration rights, Grandmothers for Peace. You name it, if it has something to do with social justice, she's probably been part of it — marching, rallying and also photographing it all along the way.

The seed to fight for equality for all people was planted in her at an early age. She was active in anti-war protests during the Vietnam era and she tutored low-income students. But watching the turbulent times she grew up in was the catalyst that fueled her desire to work to make the world a better place.

"I came from a working class Italian family. My dad ended up in a transit authority union job, my mother was a typist. Everyone in our family was Democrats because that's who working-class people were," she says. "I think I became this way watching the civil rights movement on TV and reading, watching the news, paying attention, reading about issues. It became clear to me that the system was not working for a lot of people and I became leftist, a socialist, really early."

A native of Queens in New York, Fontana attended the Peoples College of Law in Los Angeles from 1976-80. This law school was different, though — it was an unaccredited, private, non-profit school run by the students and founded by progressive lawyers for students wanting to serve their communities and people who had limited resources.

But in 1980, Georgia changed its law so that it would not allow a graduate of PCL to take the State Bar and Fontana moved back to Atlanta where she finished her degree at the Atlanta Law School, which no longer exists.

After passing the Bar, Fontana started practicing and found she hated "boring" legal work.

"I wanted to do civil rights law, poverty law. There were not a lot of places in Atlanta where you could do that," she said.

Eventually, Fontana chose to not renew her bar license and became a paralegal, working at Lambda Legal from 2006 until she retired in 2013. "I loved it," she says.

FINDING PLACE WITH ATLANTA LESBIAN FEMINIST ALLIANCE

As Fontana became more involved in Atlanta's socially progressive scene in the late 1960s, she met up with a group of women she loved to socialize with because of their strong attraction to political activism and who were being targeted by the "Lavender Menace" of other women's groups. These women later became the Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance, or ALFA, holding its first official meeting on June 23, 1972. It is within this group that Fontana became comfortable with her sexuality.

"They were leftist, radical, communists, socialists — I was finding a home not only politically but also for me emotionally," she says.

As a girl, Fontana said she dreamed about actresses she had crushes on and she was always the man in the dream, but she did not think anything of it. "I had crushes on men and women teachers. I never heard gay slurs — never had the horror of worrying about what if I'm queer," she says.

She never dated in high school or college, never got married and never felt the need to get married.

"There was never the sense I was missing something. I was just interested in doing what I was interested in doing," she says.

But through ALFA, one of the first organized groups for lesbians in Atlanta, Fontana found a safe space to become herself.

"When ALFA formed, that became the focus of my life. It was sexual and romance. This was a community I belonged in. I feel very lucky to have been part of that. We all came out in this wonderful, supportive, loving setting," she says. Fontana came out to herself in 1970. When she attended a feminist conference and was asked on a registration form to identify as either straight or gay, she checked the lesbian box — her first time acknowledging publicly who she is.

Over the years as more and more people come out and become visible in their communities, acceptance of LGBT people continues to grow — and that's what has to be done to ensure full equality, Fontana says. As she has become older in the LGBT movement, and other movements, it is important that people do not forget their elders.

"We are still part of the movement," she says.

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Rustin-Lorde Breakfast 'catalyst' for all social justice events of year

New location for annual breakfast due to ongoing growth

By DYANA BAGBY

"We need in every bay and community a group of angelic troublemakers."
— Bayard Rustin

"The erotic is a measure between the beginnings of our sense of self and the chaos of our strongest feelings."
— Audre Lorde

It's a homecoming for the 13th annual Bayard Rustin-Audre Lorde Breakfast, held every year in Atlanta as part of celebrating Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

This year's theme, "Justice, Freedom, Desire: A Homecoming," is about bringing attention to progressive issues, especially when it comes to black LGBT people.

"There's been ongoing attention around social justice and what that means for the LGBTQ community, especially for black queer folk ..." says Craig Washington, a co-founder of the popular breakfast that has grown to attract more than 200 people.

In the past, the Rustin-Lorde has focused its discussions to issues including immigration, poverty and healthcare.

But it was time to revisit why the breakfast was originally founded, Washington says — to recognize black LGBT people — and this year tackle the subject of some of the crushing discrimination faced by young LGBT people.

Homecoming has two layers, Washington explains. There's the convening and reuniting as part of ritual that is shared each year at the breakfast. And then there is the actual physical shelter and security a home provides.

"There is a critical impact for younger queer folk that due to homophobia or poverty or racism they have been disconnected from their house, particularly those who are trans or gender queer and who cannot find shelter," he says.

Safe spaces are needed for these young people, places like the Phillip Rush Center and the feminist Charis Books & More. And it's unfortunate some of these places, like Outwrite Bookstore, are no longer here to provide that safe space, Washington says.

At the breakfast, roundtable discussions that are so much part of the event, will occur and people will have the opportunity to express what all the themes mean to them, Washington says.

The decision to add "desire" to the mix was intentional and includes, but is not limited to, sexual desire, he says.

"Audre Lorde [talked] a lot about the power of the erotic. Not just the hedonistic pleasure, although that is part of it, but the deeper, profound and spiritual dimensions there are to desire," Washington says. "You can't be free if you can't be free to express your desire."

Craig Washington and **Darlene Hudson** are co-founders of the annual Rustin-Lorde Breakfast honoring gay civil rights icons Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde. (File photo)

MORE INFO

Bayard Rustin-Audre Lorde Breakfast
Monday, Jan. 20
Doors open at 9:30 a.m., breakfast served at 10 a.m.
All Saints Episcopal Church
634 West Peachtree St., Atlanta, GA 30308
www.facebook.com/RustinLordeBreakfast

MLK March and Rally
Steps off at 1:45 p.m.
Corner of Peachtree Street and Baker Street and Xenora Clayton Way
www.mlkmarchaaar.org

CREATING COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

Darlene Hudson, who co-founded the breakfast with Washington, said moving to a new location this year is due to the larger and larger crowds coming together at the past location, Saint Mark United Methodist Church. For the past few years, it's been standing room only at the Rustin-Lorde Breakfast and it was time for change, Hudson says.

"We also want to try some new and different things this year so people can see the impact the breakfast is having. We want people to leave more informed, willing to connect with others," she says. "This is the catalyst that starts all the social justice events of the year."

Washington and Hudson as well as all organizers of the breakfast also want to focus on LGBT youth at this year's breakfast.

Hudson says there is too much violence directed to youths in their late teens and early 20s and they need to know there are safe spaces for them to go.

"And if we don't have them, let's create them, where they can be nurtured properly," she says.

A children's space was added to the breakfast a few years ago and has become popular, allowing younger participants to create signs to carry in the MLK March following the breakfast.

Speaking at this year's breakfast will be Rev. Maressa Pendermon of Unity Fellowship Church and Pastor Troy Sanders of Victory for the World Church in Stone Mountain. Both will also be the LGBT speakers at the rally at the King Center that follows the annual MLK March. This year, Southerners on New Ground, an organization working with rural LGBT people on issues ranging from immigration to fair wages, is the fiscal sponsor of the breakfast, bringing two like-minded organizations together in an official capacity, says Hudson.

The breakfast isn't just about speakers, Hudson says. It is and always been about creating community dialogue.

This year, the community goes international with activists visiting from India, Nepal and Pakistan attending as part of the International Visitor Leadership Program of the U.S. Department of State.

For those who are thinking about attending this year's breakfast and need some convincing, Washington says it's a time and place to be around others who are on the front lines and doing the foot work needed to make Atlanta, and the world, a better place to live for all people.

"The people that come are really about seeking and building community, they are about mutual support, they are about doing what they can to change the world in a positive away," he says.

"These people are fully alive and present. This breakfast is really about being with that tribe. Our participants are also a great demonstration of Atlanta's LGBTQ community pulling together," he adds. "It's a great demonstration of Atlanta's beloved community doing what we do."

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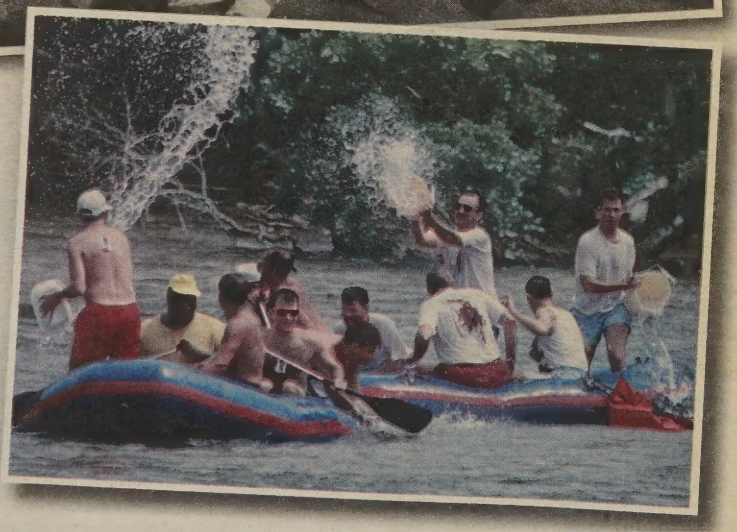
Georgia LGBTQ Archives Project saves our history

Social histories of everyday people sought by several organizations

By PATRICK SAUNDERS

on LGBT AGING

(Above) **January 9, 1990:** Police stand in front of the Centers for Disease Control as gay activists from ACT UP stage a 'die-in' to protest the CDC's handling of the AIDS crisis. (AJC photos via Georgia State University)



(Right) **August 13, 1994:** Water fight between rafters on the Chattahoochee River during the 16th annual gay men's Hotlanta River Expo.

You don't have to be Harvey Milk to warrant having your history documented, and the team behind the Georgia LGBTQ Archives Project is on a mission to make you realize it — before it's too late.

The Archives Project is loaded with the foremost experts in archiving gay Georgia history. They include the Auburn Avenue and Ponce de Leon branches of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library, Atlanta History Center, Emory University's Manuscript, Archives and Rare Books Library (MARBL), Georgia State University's Special Collections & Archives, Kennesaw State University, Touching Up Our Roots, and more.

Their goals are to demystify the archival process, combine resources to fill out each other's collections, and make sure the history they document includes all voices across the LGBTQ spectrum.

The idea for the project sprung in late 2011 with Ann Edmonds, the manager of the LGBT circulating collection at the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library. She started going to Atlanta SAGE meetings (Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Elders) and became aware that some people were downsizing and didn't know what to do with some of their things.

Edmonds arranged a presentation to SAGE about how to archive items from their collections, inviting along representatives from Touching Up Our Roots, the Atlanta History Center, Georgia State and Emory as well.

What started as a one-off presentation turned into a follow-up meeting in December 2011, where they discussed meeting on a regular basis.

"After that it just took off on its own," Edmonds says. "It combusted."

The archivists realized that they had no mechanism to get together and combine resources, play off of each other and support each other.

"We had our first public awareness event at the Rush Center in May 2012," says Hillery Rink, president of the group. "It filled up the whole meeting space."

'AN INVISIBLE COMMUNITY'

"We want to demystify the process," Edmonds says. "Most people think about archives and Martin Luther King and Harvey Milk, not realizing that what researchers are looking for now are social histories."

They not only want to give a human face to certain historical events, but document who suffered the effects, who made things happen and why?

"That kind of human input is what's going to be gone if we don't preserve these things," Edmonds says.

With the South being less progressive than other areas of the country, the LGBTQ community here was at a greater risk of being ignored by traditional media, Rink says. "If you look at it, we were sort of an invisible community," he says.

Archiving history proves challenging for the LGBT community in particular. The AIDS epidemic wiped out not only a generation of gay men, but also their historical collections as well. And many families dispose of their LGBT relative's materials either because of ignorance or discrimination, says Edmonds.

"Many LGBTs are unfortunately not connected with their families, so when they die, their collections are just disposed of," says Edmonds. "Even in well-meaning families, it's just not something they're connected with and they don't know. So if you haven't made provisions for it, your part of the picture is gone forever."

(Above) **December 3, 1990:** DeKalb County police arrest a woman, protesting the CDC's handling of women with AIDS.

(Left) **November 10, 1994:** Outwrite Bookstore and Coffeehouse owner **Philip Rafshoon**.

(Above) **October 11, 1989: Moorylien Jenkins** and **David Kelly** on National Coming Out Day at the Atlanta Gay Center

(Left) **September 7, 1986: Michael Hardwick,** defendant in the Georgia sodomy case Bowers v. Hardwick, speaking to the Atlanta Business and Professional Guild.

'PEOPLE WILL BE LOOKING FOR IT IN THE FUTURE'

Now that the Georgia LGBTQ Archives Project has been incorporated (thanks to pro bono work from the Stonewall Bar Association), they are applying to be a 501(c)3 organization so they can raise money to advance the cause.

Simultaneously, they're recognizing the need to diversify the collection. In short, most of the collection so far is from upper middle class white males and a modest amount of women.

Members of the project continue to give presentations to local groups, like the March 1 event with the Atlanta Prime Timers. Another public awareness event is planned for later this year that will be similar to the one held at the Rush Center in 2012.

In the meantime, the project wants to hear from seniors and others before their place in Georgia's LGBT history is lost.

"If you're not there, part of the picture is missing, and it will never be able to be filled in," Edmonds says. "People care, and they will care in the future, and they will be looking for it in the future."

Saving Our Stories

What is the Georgia LGBTQ Archives Project?

A group of archivists and librarians who are dedicated to preserving Georgia's LGBTQ history. They have combined resources to point people in the right direction when they have something they want to donate. They will also provide resources on how to view the archive.

Why is there a need for this project?

Because much of LGBTQ history is lost when people pass away, either because their families are not aware of the historical value of certain items, or they don't care due to intolerance. The AIDS epidemic also wiped out a significant portion of our history.

Where can I view a sample of the archive?

At the group's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pages/Georgia-LGBTQ-Archives-Project/257162497710554.

Each school or organization also has more information about their archive online along with visiting information if applicable:

- Ponce de Leon Branch of Atlanta-Fulton Public Library: http://www.librarything.org (username poncedeleonlibrary, password 123456)
- Emory University's Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library (MARBL): http://marbl.library.emory.edu
- Kennesaw State University's Museums, Archives & Rare Books: www.web.kennesaw.edu/archives/lgbtiq-project
- Georgia State University: www.research.library.gsu.edu/lgbtqiq

What is eligible to be donated?

More than you realize. Photo albums, private letters, papers, computer hard drives, protest signs used in parades, t-shirts, flyers, gay media publications and much more.

I'm not famous, so why would the Georgia LGBTQ Archives Project want my stuff?

"Fame is not required" as the group will tell you. If you're considering something to give, contact them and let them decide whether it's worth being archived.

GEORGIA LGBTQ ARCHIVES PROJECT

Okay, I think I have something I want to donate. What do I do?

Message the group at their Facebook page. Or e-mail group president Hillery Rink at hilleryrink@yahoo.com. Or call him at 404-659-3133.

The archivists want me to sort through my stuff first before submitting, right?

No! There is no telling what you have and the archivists would much rather sort through it themselves so nothing important gets thrown out before it reaches them. The *very things that people think aren't useful* are the very things an archivist might be missing.

What if I can't or don't want to donate my things right now?

Contact the Archives Project and they will help you arrange to have it written into your will so that nothing gets tossed out.

WISH LIST

Here are some items that a couple of the organizations are looking for. Happy hunting!

Kennesaw State University

1. Missing/damaged issues of Southern Voice. View the list of the issues they are looking for here: www.web.kennesaw.edu/archives/lgbtq-publications-collection
2. People involved with early LGBTQ student groups and events on the KSU campus
3. Cobb Citizens Coalition
4. Activists and organizations involved with the "Olympics Out of Cobb" campaign

Georgia State University

1. Issues of The Atlanta Gay Center News
2. Issues of RFD (journal of the Radical Fairies)
3. Issues of local lesbian newsletter Amethyst
4. Issues of local Prime Timers newsletter Aptitudes

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Gay culture's fixation with youth, beauty on upswing

Ads push pills and surgery, but what about facing reality?

By CLIFF BOSTOCK

About the time I turned 42, my therapist delivered an ultimatum. If I didn't agree to become sexually and romantically abstinent for a year, he wouldn't continue to see me. It seems that the compulsions of my midlife crisis were inhibiting my transformation into a mature, middle-aged gay man — otherwise known among the young as a respectable dead person.

I agonized for a week. *Mental health or lots of random dick? Adapting to middle age or lots more crazed adolescent romance?* I decided to give abstinence a try and I spent most of my spare time that year in the bathtub with scented candles. But I also enrolled in grad school for a new career in psychology. I spent half my time for two years interning on the West Coast. I wrote three weekly columns, did radio work and conducted workshops. I ramped up my already obsessive workouts at the gym. You need biceps to masturbate.

It really was a time of huge positive change. Childhood shapes much of life, but there comes a time, typically between 40 and 55, when the parts of us that have been denied expression come raging out of the closet of lifelong repression. It's an opportunity for true transformation ... or total lunacy. Usually both.

MORE INFO

'Golden Gays'
www.slice.ca/video/#golden-gays/video

'Old Dogs and New Tricks'
www.olddogsnewtrickstheseries.com/aboutus.html

Atlanta Jacks
http://ca.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/atlanta_jacks/info

Atlanta Prime Timers
www.atlantaprimetimers.com

SAGE Atlanta
www.facebook.com/sageatl

The typical lunacy is the sexual and romantic stuff that my therapist effectively banned. It would have been hard to find my way into a new career while I was moving a new man into my apartment every seven weeks. No, not everyone who hits midlife needs abstinence. Some of us just go way crazier than others. (And, yes, my therapists's ban was temporary.)

Gay men really are special in this respect. We grow up hearing that our bodies, the source of the sexual desire that makes us different, are inherently evil. That's why, in the

on LGBT AGING

years of "gay liberation," having lots of sex was literally considered a self-affirming act of civil disobedience (just as it was among feminists of the time). We appropriated the stereotypical markers of blue-collar masculinity — jeans, flannel shirts, buzz cuts, and facial hair — and flooded gyms to get pecs and abs to exhibit on dance floors while we tapped tambourines. It was kinda campy and kinda hot.

This particular aspect of gay culture — the obsession with youth, masculinity and beauty — has grown only more intense. Where once gay retirees typically moved into the well-known closet of invisibility, you can now move to Fort Lauderdale or Palm Springs, go on testosterone replacement therapy, pop Viagra, rip your shirt off, and dance to the Village People at 7 p.m. — just before your bedtime. Personally, I'd rather die prematurely than retire in FTL, but, really, you can live your second adolescence anywhere now, including cyberslums like Manhunt, Adam 4 Adam, Scruff, and – quelle horreur! – Silver Daddies, where old age is a fetish.

Aging does bring health problems and — in case you forgot — death. But the healthcare industry has become ever more adept at medicalizing the cosmetic and sexual effects of aging. A couple of weeks ago, I counted 12 ads in David and Fenuxe magazines for services to eliminate those unsightly sags, bags and wrinkles. Meanwhile, I didn't see a single man who looked much over 40 in the magazines' candid photos.

There is nothing inherently wrong with struggling to maintain youthful looks and a fully functioning penis, of course. The problem is how common vanity misdirects us. The New York Times told a heartbreaking story in that respect two years ago when it reported the death of Bob Bergeron, 49, a gay psychotherapist, who killed himself just before publication of his self-help book,"The Right Side of Forty: The Complete Guide to Happiness for Gay Men at Midlife and Beyond."

Bergeron's suicide note included an arrow pointed toward the title page of his book with the words:"It's a lie based on bad information."

Sorry to say, but I think his note was correct to a great extent. If you look up videos of Bergeron giving talks on the subject, you quickly realize his book was the result of his own struggle to adapt to losing the status of "pretty boy." Fine, but his recommendations aren't really about changing self image, becoming an elder. They're about how to hold onto the values associated with being hot and young.

An inquiry into what it means to be gay, out and older is finally stirring, but the vast majority of it is motivated by the same thinking. Check out episodes of the Branch TV series, "Golden Gays" or the ongoing web video series, "Old Dogs and New Tricks." Both, but especially "Golden Gays," include virtually no self-reflection in their stories of maintaining a desperate hold on youth and beauty. Sure, it's trashy irreality programming, but would it hurt to add the depth of, say, "Duck Dynasty"?

Les Bouska, a self-styled "total image expert" who owns Atlanta Hair Studio, offers a different attitude toward aging that doesn't totally eclipse brain function. He's an advocate of cosmetic work, of course: "There is no need for any man that does not want to look his age to do so. We have countless options available to prevent or erase the visible signs of aging."

I think that's a bit of an exaggeration, and it doesn't mention the high prices involved. But he's also engaged in spiritual and recreational practices that include sex. He hosts the monthly Atlanta Jacks sex club, for example, where his concern, above all, is creating a space "without judgment" for men to engage in safe sex. "Any man," he says, "that has the balls to strip down and walk in that room is welcome. Age, race, size, shape, or any other physical trait is secondary to the energy he brings to the group." Thus sex retains its importance but minus the competitive vanity that can make aging miserable enough to provoke suicide.

There are also alternative social groups around town, like the Atlanta Prime Timers. SAGE Atlanta offers assistance to aging LGBT people.

None of us — obviously including me — is immune to the wish to be awash in the fountain of gay youth. But there comes the point when you've really got to find a new moisturizer.

There comes a time, typically between 40 and 55, when the parts of us that have been denied expression come raging out of the closet of lifelong repression. It's an opportunity for true transformation ... or total lunacy. Usually both.

Cliff Bostock, PhD, offers workshops and individual work in various personal growth topics, including gay aging. See his websites, cliffbostock.com and gayaging.wordpress.com.

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LGBT senior housing community on the drawing board for Atlanta?

Atlanta developer surveying community, hunting for property

By PATRICK SAUNDERS

Faced with a demographic with a unique set of circumstances, LGBT-friendly senior housing communities are sprouting up in several cities around the country. And an Atlanta real estate developer, emboldened by years of research and an ongoing survey of the marketplace, is on the hunt for a property on which to build.

"This is the first time we've had out gay people as seniors, so we haven't had a population that was out that we can emulate as far as how to have an active life," says Cloud 9 Global's gay developer Karl Gustafson. Cloud 9 Global seeks to provide "urban living for inclusive healthy aging," according to its website.

And housing is a topic that cannot be avoided when discussing LGBT seniors.

"In every conversation that we have in every town hall meeting or focus group or survey that we have ever done of LGBT seniors, the issues of housing come up," says Health Initiative Executive Director Linda Ellis.

Now that that segment is "coming of age," more and more evidence is appearing that shows LGBT seniors are facing discrimination from senior housing residents and staff and are sometimes forced back into the closet.

As a result, LGBT-friendly senior housing communities have opened in Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Philadelphia, and there are plans in the works for communities in San Francisco and Chicago.

Questions remain as to what such a community would look like in Atlanta, how it would be funded and how long before it can become a reality.

Gay developer Karl Gustafson wants to build an LGBT-friendly senior housing community in Atlanta — an idea that is catching on in cities such as Philadelphia, home to the gay-friendly John C. Anderson apartment building. (Courtesy photo)

'PEOPLE ARE HAVING TO GO BACK INTO THE CLOSET'

The idea of an LGBT-friendly senior housing complex came to Gustafson several years ago when his parents were looking for affordable senior living. After seeing the hoops they had to jump through just to find one or two good communities, it got him thinking about the additional challenges LGBT seniors must face.

"People not just in Atlanta but around the country can get into senior housing and people are cordial to them, but no one is making any friends with gay folks," Gustafson tells GA Voice. "People are having to go back in the closet, hide their pictures, because they feel they'll get abused and ostracized."

He also stresses the unique circumstances LGBTs face, as they are less likely to have children they can live with, and families are less supportive.

He ran an initial survey six years ago after his parents' experience, then last summer he created a new, expanded survey, partnered with Atlanta's SAGE affiliate, a program managed by The Health Initiative, and started putting it out to the community last fall via promotion at Atlanta Pride and getting organizations to send it through their email lists.

He has nearly 400 responses so far, and among the findings, he discovered that only about 10 percent of respondents are interested in LGBT-only senior housing. So it's not so much about all-gay all the time, and more about inclusivity, he found.

Ellis has found less consistent answers in her dealings with the community.

"In every conversation that I have, someone there will want it to be LGBT-specific housing, someone there will want it to be LGBT-friendly but mixed with heterosexual senior housing, someone will want to live in a community that combines seniors with multi-generations within the LGBT community," she says.

"As many individuals that are raising the questions, there are that many answers," she continues. "We don't know yet what is the best or most sustainable here in Atlanta."

'YOU MUST HAVE A UNITED FRONT IN THE LGBT COMMUNITY'

Just this week, the ribbon was cut at Philadelphia's John C. Anderson Apartments, a gay-friendly 56-unit complex that is unique in that it's financed entirely with public money.

Mark Segal, publisher of the Philadelphia Gay News, led the push to bring this idea to life almost 10 years ago.

"You must have a united front in the LGBT community and you must understand political clout," he tells GA Voice.

Ideas were floated to organizations both inside and outside the LGBT community, including senior organizations in the area, government leaders, neighborhood organizations and more.

The group stuck to a guiding principle throughout: don't settle for anything less than equal.

"We wanted to be treated by HUD and every other city, state and federal agency in equal form just like any other organization or community interest," he says. "We had a good proposal and we expected it to be funded. We finished the building in record time and on budget."

As for the end result of the journey, Segal opens up about a recent day giving a tour of the building to a group of senior non-profit agencies.

"I walked into one of the apartments and a woman was inside who turned and said to the whole group, 'Welcome to my apartment!'" Segal says. "Which was weird because we hadn't opened the building to residents yet. But she said, 'Well it will be mine in two weeks.'"

"Then she asked me if she could have her girlfriend there," he continues. "I said, 'Of course, why wouldn't you be able to?' And she said, 'Because the other senior housing project I lived in wouldn't let me bring my girlfriend in.'"

TURNAROUND AND WORKAROUNDS

Aside from what the community should look like, things always turn back to money. Gustafson estimates that for a 150-200 unit intown community, it would cost roughly $40 million, and he expects it to be privately funded.

Ellis agrees that public funds will be harder to come by in Georgia.

"One of the problems we have to deal with in this state, being a predominantly red state, is we don't have the opportunity for a combined public/private partnership that others do in Chicago or Philadelphia," she says.

Meanwhile, Atlanta LGBT seniors have figured out workarounds.

"There are people who are figuring out their own solutions while we're having these conversations," Ellis says. "There are seniors that are intentionally moving into condominium complexes or cooperative housing arrangements or neighborhoods where they know they'll be surrounded by other LGBT seniors or LGBT individuals and they're creating communities. So while we're having these larger conversations, people are forming their own sense of housing and intentional community."

She sees some sort of LGBT-friendly senior housing community — whatever it may look like — arriving within the next 10 years.

Gustafson is more optimistic.

"I would certainly hope within five years from now that that's a real option for us in Atlanta," he says.

THEATER BY JIM FARMER

Gay-fave 'Book of Mormon' coming to Fox Theatre

Most performers have to wait awhile and pay their dues before they land starring roles in splashy musicals. Georgia native Grey Henson, luckily, didn't have to wait — he got a plum role in "The Book of Mormon" as his first professional stage gig after college. One of the most acclaimed and popular musicals of the last decade, the gay-themed "Mormon" debuts in Atlanta at the end of the month, courtesy of Broadway Across America.

As a gay performer growing up in Macon, Henson spread his wings and attended Carnegie Mellon University after high school. He thought he would pursue a dancing career, but after a pre-college camp at Carnegie he realized he wanted to pursue acting/musical theater. He has been with the show since the national tour opened in August 2012 in Denver. He auditioned for the role and knew he got it even before he graduated.

Created by the "South Park" team of Trey Parker and Matt Stone, as well as Robert Lopez, co-composer and co-lyricist of "Avenue Q," "The Book of Mormon" follows a pair of Mormon missionaries as they visit a village in Uganda. As they try and spread the word of their scriptures, they realize the natives have larger issues to contend with.

DETAILS
'The Book of Mormon'
Jan. 28 – Feb. 9
The Fox Theatre
660 Peachtree St. NE,
Atlanta, GA 30308
www.atlanta.broadway.com

Henson plays the sexually conflicted Elder McKinley, the Mormon district leader who also visits the area.

"He is a 19-year-old overseeing other 19-year-olds, so he feels full of power," says Henson. McKinley is having all these thoughts he realizes he should not be having. In his big number "Turn it Off," he suggests to his fellow missionaries that they simply switch off negatives feelings and thoughts.

"Mormon" won a slew of Tony Awards — nine in all, including Best Musical. As he has criss-crossed the country with the production, Henson has seen city after city fall for it. Every blue moon there is someone who is upset, he says, noting that some people think the musical is racier than it is.

"It's usually someone who knows nothing about the show or the 'South Park' guys," says the actor. "Ninety-nine percent of the crowds love it."

LGBT audiences have been particularly accepting of "Book of Mormon," Henson feels. "The show, at the end of it, is touching and is about acceptance," he says. "For McKinley, it does get better and LGBT audiences can see that he has struggled."

Henson still calls Macon his home, although at some point he realizes he will need to move to New York to further pursue a performing career.

Another gay performer in the cast is Daniel LeClaire, who has also been with the musical since the national tour launched. He is part of the ensemble, bringing to life many characters including two of the elders. Like Henson, he feels lucky to be with the national tour.

"This is the only show I would think about being part of for two years," he admits. "It's all about openness and love; there is no hate," he says. His visit will be his first professional gig in the ATL. He is in no hurry to leave but when he does he might focus on his music career more so than acting.

Among his other stage and TV credits was the recent "Betty White 90th Birthday" special. He had a blast. "She is the hardest working woman in the business," he recalls. "She never sat down the entire time."

Grey Henson of Macon, Ga., stars in the award-winning musical 'The Book of Mormon.' (Publicity photos)

THE LGBT IMMIGRATION EXPERTS

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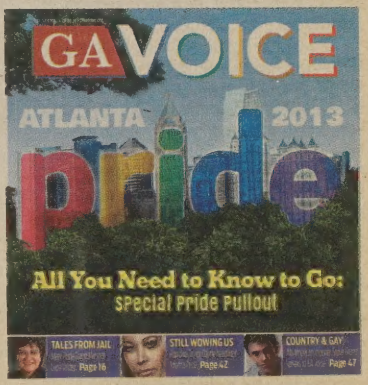
GA VOICES OUR OPINION

EDITORIAL

Goodbyes & hellos

Moving past drama to continue to serve our community

By CHRIS CASH,
Managing Partner



Media drama. GA Voice was a part of some much discussed scuttlebutt in 2013. Some of you, maybe many of you, read about it in our pages and on our website as well as on Project Q. It made for exciting headlines and fodder particularly for those who love to espouse their opinions and judgments. Just this week Project Q reported that Fenuxe has been sold to another media group with ties in Atlanta and in Tampa. And the beat goes on. We are more than ready to move on- in fact, we have moved on- but let me offer the truthful and not-so-dramatic facts about a case we consider closed. Given that we are bound by a confidentiality agreement with certain parties, I am limited in what I can say but I can offer enough information so there is no more confusion- for those of you who care. If not, just skip to the last few paragraphs.

HERE IS THE SKINNY

Yes, we were approached by a local LGBT media outlet who expressed interest in purchasing us. Yes, we did engage in discussions. Why? Because we thought it might be a way to insure the survival and growth of both media outlets in a time when advertising dollars (which we cannot function without since we do not charge for the newspaper or content on our website) are hard to come by. No, GA Voice never signed a Letter of Intent. Yes, Letters of Intent were offered but we could not come to agreement on terms. Given that we could not come to agreement, after many attempts, we told our potential purchaser "thanks for the offer but no thanks" and moved on. It was an amicable split — no drama, no threats and nothing but best wishes for each other. Case closed.

A local LGBT newspaper is vital to the health of the community it serves. I do not take our role lightly nor do I fool myself that we are above scrutiny. We are a business trying to survive like any other small business. Some days it is difficult, some days it is exalting. Those days that are exalting never have anything to do with money, it always has to do with our community and our readers. Feedback that says how vital we are; stories that lift us all up whether it's about marriage equality or a young person who comes out to his or her sports team. We relish these stories and they energize us to continue our work.

MOVING ON

Which is what we have done. As many of you already know, Dyana Bagby is now our editor. Dyana served as deputy editor since we launched in early 2010. Prior to that, she was with Southern Voice for many years. Her knowledge of this community, and her dedication to it, is unsurpassed. She is a journalist in every sense of the word and we know how fortunate we are to have her leading our editorial staff.

Just a week or so ago we were lucky enough to have Patrick Saunders join our team as deputy editor. Patrick, born and raised in Atlanta, is a graduate of the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication. He wrote for that school's newspaper, The Red & Black, and he covered the gay beat for Creative

Expect more coverage, more timely coverage and stories that mean the most to you. Also, expect a new website that is more interactive than our old one.

Deputy Editor **Patrick Saunders** is the newest member of the GA Voice staff. (Photo by Kyle Strahl)

Art Director **Mike Ritter** and Editor **Dyana Bagby** at the GA Voice booth during Atlanta Pride 2013. (File photo)

Loafing as a freelancer for several years, covering the demise of Southern Voice and the birth of GA Voice. He caught our eye then with his unbiased reporting and skillful writing. Patrick also worked as senior writer for Fenuxe from mid-2010 to mid-2011 and recently did freelance work for Project Q.

"I've run in the same circles with the GA Voice team for several years now and have always respected them and the work they do," Patrick says. "The timing finally lined up for both of us and I couldn't be happier to join such a respected publication. I look forward to telling the community's stories and documenting the movement for GA Voice for years to come."

Our editorial team, which includes art director Mike Ritter, is formidable.

"I am so excited to have Patrick join the GA Voice team and bring his talent to our newspaper and website," says Bagby. "I have always been impressed with his reporting and I know he will be a great addition to covering LGBT Georgia."

Expect more coverage, more timely coverage and stories that mean the most to you. Also, expect a new website that is more interactive than our old one as we attempt to keep up with the ever-changing techno landscape. You will find better display on your mobile devices as well. The revamped website is scheduled to debut on Jan. 24.

As always, we encourage your thoughts on how we can better serve all members of our community. Reach out to me, publisher Tim Boyd, Dyana or Patrick with any ideas you have, even if you think they might not be of interest. Chances are good that we will find them interesting.

GA VOICE

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Postmaster: Send address changes to the Georgia Voice, PO Box 77401, Atlanta, GA 30357. The Georgia Voice is published every other Friday by The Georgia Voice, LLC. Individual subscriptions are $60 per year for 26 issues. Postage paid at Atlanta, GA, and additional mailing offices.

The editorial positions of the Georgia Voice are expressed in editorials and in editor's notes. Other opinions are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Georgia Voice and its staff.

To submit a letter or commentary: Letters should be fewer than 400 words and commentary, for web or print, should be fewer than 750 words. Submissions may be edited for content and length, and must include a name, address and phone number for verification. Email submissions to editor@thegavoice.com or mail to the address above.

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BEST BETS

01.17.13–01.30.14

Event spotlight

FRIDAY, JAN. 17

Traxx Girls presents the **Ladies Lounge** with **DJ Mary Mac** as part of MLK weekend fare at **My Sister's Room**, 10 p.m., www.mysistersroom.com.

SATURDAY, JAN. 18

Wassup N Atl and **Traxx** combine for this MLK party with **DJ Trouble, DJ Marz**, eight VIP sections and a huge dance floor, from 10 p.m. – 3 a.m at **Future Vision**, 1212 Fowler Street, Atlanta, GA 30318, www.traxxatlanta.com, www.wassupnatl.com

SUNDAY, JAN. 19

It's **Knomie Moore's** last performance with the **Armorettes** at the camp drag troupe's **35th anniversary show at Burkhart's.** Over the years, the Armorettes have raised some $3 million for AIDS organizations, 8 p.m., www.burkharts.com

FRIDAY, JAN. 17

The Third Friday Film Series kicks off the new year with the documentary **"A Place at the Table,"** looking at the issue of hunger in America, 7 – 9 p.m., **First Existential Congregation** of **Atlanta**, www.irstexistentialist.org

The Other Show starring **Celeste Holmes, Edie Cheezburger, Evah Destruction, Jaye Lish, Miami Royale** and **Violet Chachki** with special guests **Extasy Grey** & **Kryean Kally**. $5 cover. Show starts at 9:30 p.m., **Jungle**. www.jungleatl.com

Rockstars Productions continues its MLK Weekend festivities tonight at **Einstein's** from 7 – 11 p.m. and then at its **Black Preferred Party** at **Atria**, from 10 p.m. – 4 a.m., 1212 Fowler Street, Atlanta, GA 30318, www.rockstarsproduction.com

The Prodigy's RWT present **The Burn Out ball** event, 7 p.m. – 1 a.m., 1011 Fair St. Atlanta, GA 30314

A hit last fall, **"The Book Club Play,"** featuring a gay character, gets an encore run at **Horizon Theatre**, opening tonight at 8 p.m., www.horizontheatre.com

Traxx Atlanta, **Skate Boyz & Live Life Loud** present the **Neon Dreams/Mansion** party, with complimentary party bus drop-off and pick-up at Kroger Parking Lot, 10 p.m., 3359 Chamblee Tucker Road, Atlanta, GA 30341, www.traxxatlanta.com

Cream Ultra Lounge and **Lucky Diamonds** presents **Elevate Fridays MLK Weekend Kickoff and Grand Hustle Birthday Bash** for **Young Dro** and **DJ MLK**, elevatefridays.eventbrite.com

FRIDAY, JAN. 17-19

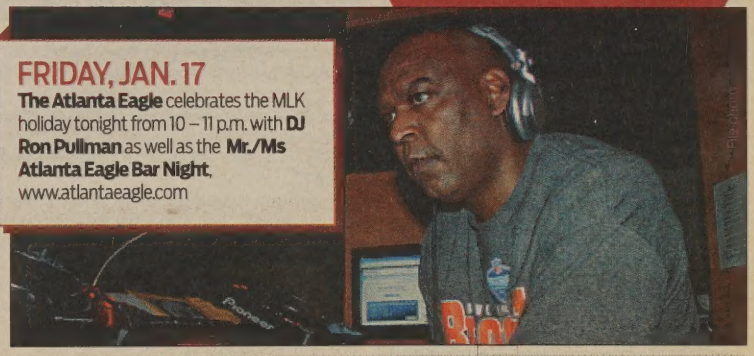
The **Armorettes** celebrates its **35th anniversary** throughout the weekend and also serves as a retirement weekend for **Knomie Moore** and **Sofonda Cox**. On Friday, join the camp drag troupe for a bar crawl beginning at 8 p.m. at The **Hideaway** then 9:30 p.m. at **BJ Roosters**, 11 p.m. at **Opus** and then headed to **Bliss** at midnight. On Saturday, it's the **Armorette Follies** at the **Heretic** at 8 p.m. hosted by **Bubba Dee**, **Knomie Moore** and **Sofonda Cox.** This will be **Sofonda Cox's** final performance. Then the Armorettes' anniversary party at **Burkhart's** at 8 p.m. and the final performance of Knomie Moore, www.armorettes.com

'Tell us about your LGBT event'

There are two ways to submit your LGBT event for inclusion in our online and print calendars. Submit your event info to **www.theGAVvoice.com** or e-mail details to **editor@theGAVoice.com**.

FRIDAY, JAN. 17

The Atlanta Eagle celebrates the MLK holiday tonight from 10 – 11 p.m. with **DJ Ron Pullman** as well as the **Mr./Ms Atlanta Eagle Bar Night**, www.atlantaeagle.com



SOMETHING GAY EVERY DAY!

Bookmark www.thegavoice.com to get your daily dose of local LGBT events.

SATURDAY, JAN. 18

Join **Lost-N-Found Youth** as they clean up their new home for homeless youth, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., 768 Juniper Street, Atlanta, GA 30308

Create Love for Women Who Love Women presents a **workshop on DOMA** and its impact on people in Georgia with **Judge Phyllis Williams**. 10 a.m.- 12:30 p.m., donation asked is $10, **Little Five Points Community Center,** sharrongjamison@gmail.com, imani@surviving2thriving.org, www.phyllisrwilliamspc.com

The Lesbian 50+ Potluck Social brings together great company and great food, 6 – 8 p.m., **Phillip Rush Center**, www.rushcenteratl.org

Ladies At Play cranks it up at **Aurum** for MLK festivities with **DJ Deb** with no cover, tonight from 6 – 10 p.m., www.aurumlounge.com

Topher Payne's new play **"The Only Light in Reno,"** about a room filled with the likes of **Marilyn Monroe**, **Elizabeth Taylor** and **Montgomery Clift** one evening in 1960, continues at **Georgia Ensemble Theatre** in Roswell through January 26, 8 p.m., www.get.org

Rockstar Productions' main MLK weekend event is at the **595 Event Center,** from 10 p.m. – 3 a.m., 595 North Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30318 **Metro Fuxon** is the site for the **K.I.S.S. King Party Traxx Girls** party with **Remy V**, with doors opening at 10 p.m., www.metrofuxon.com

SUNDAY, JAN. 19

Actor's Express continues the gay-themed comedy/drama **"Six Degrees of Separation,"** directed by its artistic director **Freddie Ashley**, through Feb. 9, with a matinee performance today at 2 p.m., www.actorsexpress.com

The Icon Himself presents **"I Am, Part II, Mini Ball Deluxe,"** with a grand prize of $1,000. Doors open at 8 p.m., with a $20 cover all night, **Club Aries,** 1995 Metropolitan Parkway, Atlanta, GA 30313

Ladies At Play continues its MLK Weekend party at **Tongue and Groove**, with no cover before 11 p.m. Featuring 107.5's **DJ Silver Knight** accompanied by hot female drummer **Crystal Martin** of **Thundersnatch** and **DJ Fyre**. 10 p.m. – 2:30 a.m., www.tongueandgrooveonline.com

Rockstars Productions ends its weekend MLK festivities with **Sunday Night Live** at **Sugar Hill**, 10 p.m. – 4 a.m., 45 Bennett St., Atlanta, GA 30309, www.rockstarsproduction.com

Traxx Atlanta continues its MLK weekend event with **Men After Dark,** the **MLK After Hours Bash** with dancers from across the country, beginning at 3 a.m., **XS Ultra Lounge**, 708 Spring St., Atlanta, GA 30308, www.traxxatlanta.com

Wassup N Atl continues its MLK weekend party tonight at **Jungle Atlanta**, www.jungleatl.com, wassupnatl.com

HBO unveils its new gay-themed series **"Looking,"** about a group of gay male friends in San Francisco, directed by Andrew Haigh ("Weekend") and starring out actor Jonathan Groff of "Glee" fame, 10:30 p.m., HBO, www.hbo.com

David Knapp spins at **Xion**, located behind **Jungle**, beginning at 3 a.m., www.jungleatl.com

"Living the Dream Ball" hosted by **Mother Entyce DaVinci, Jewel Mizrahi,** and **Icon Jaimee** 007, 4 – 8 p.m., **Cream Ultra Lounge**, 3249 Buford Highway NE Atlanta, GA 30329, http://on.fb.me/1lT1uHh

MONDAY, JAN. 20

The 13th annual Bayard Rustin/Audre Lourde breakfast will be held at **All Saints Episcopal Church**. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. with breakfast served at 10 a.m. www.allsaintsatlanta.org, www.facebook.com/RustinLordeBreakfast

TUESDAY, JAN. 21

The Atlanta DINE-Out for **Muscular Dystrophy** is a benefit/community fundraiser for The **FSH Society**, raising money to help find a cure for **FacioScapuloHumeral Muscular Dystrophy** (FSH or FSHD), 6 – 10 p.m., **Yeah! Burger**, www.yeahburger.com

AID Atlanta's Gay Outreach Team discusses **One Night Stands** – and making them safe. 6:30 – 8 p.m., **Phillip Rush Center**, www.rushcenteratl.org

Publicity photo

SUNDAY, JAN. 19

Lion's Den Atlanta presents its **International Male** MLK party featuring special guest appearance by the all new cast of **"Tha Life Atlanta"** with **MC Big Daddy** and **DJ Mary Mac** spinning the beats. 10 p.m., www.facebook.com/thelionsdenatlanta

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 22

Dancer, social worker and author **Sheila K. Collins** discusses her book **"Warrior Mother: Fierce Love, Unbearable Loss and Rituals that Heal,"** dealing with her son's battle with AIDS and her daughter's fight against breast cancer, tonight at 7:30 p.m. at **Charis Books**, www.charisbooksandmore.com

Join funny man **Ian Aber** for the monthly **Abear Comedy Show**, 8 p.m., **Jungle Atlanta**, www.jungleatl.com

Wednesday nights are **Piano Night with David Reeb** at **Mixx Atlanta**, www.mixxatlanta.com

THURSDAY, JAN. 23

SAGE Atlanta hosts it monthly **Cards and Social Hour** event, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., **Phillip Rush Center,** www.rushcenteratl.org

Join **Charis** for a wild ride with some steamy stories to warm you on the coldest winter night. Smart, tough, and very sexy, these femmes will keep you on the edge of your seat. Featured performers include: **Miel Rose, Kathleen Delaney-Adams, & Francis Varian** with special guests **Adriana Chiknas** & **Asha Leong**, 7:30 – 9 p.m., **Charis Books**, www.charisbooksandmore.com

Decadence: A Night of Drinking and Debauchery, is hosted by **Adam Bland** and **Ashley Mitchell**, with beats by **DJ Daryl Cox**, beginning at 10 p.m. with a **Wet Underwear Contest** at 11 p.m., **Ten Atlanta**, www.tenatlanta.com

Trinity Bonet from "Rupaul's Drag Race" hosts **Dancefloor Divas** along with fellow performer Phoenix, 11:30 p.m., **Burkhart's**, www.burkharts.com

FRIDAY, JAN. 24

Tacos and more - the **Atlanta Gay Chamber of Commerce (AGLCC)** hosts a free **Fourth Friday** event blending socializing and networking opportunities, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., **Escorpion Tacos & Tequila**, www.urestaurants.com

The Other Show is every Friday and features such drag icons as **Edie Cheezburger**, **Violet Chachki** and **Jaye Lish**. 9 p.m., **Jungle**, www.jungleatl.com

The **Absolut Vodka**-sponsored **Ladies' Night w/ DJ Liz Owen** begins tonight at the **Upstairs Bar at Blakes**, from 10pm – close, www.blakesontheparkatlanta.com

The Divas Cabaret, starring **Destiny Brooks**, **Heather Daniels**, **Iysis Dupree**, **Kitty Love** and special guests, begins at 11 p.m., with **DJ Birdman** spinning before and after, **LeBuzz**, www.thenewlebuzz.com

Get down with the boys in town, with the assistance of **DJ Headmaster**, at the **Boys Room Video Dance Party** at **Mary's**, www.marysatlanta.com

SATURDAY, JAN. 25

The bears are back – it's **Bearracuda Night** at the **Atlanta Heretic**, with doors opening at 9 p.m., www.atlantaheretic.com

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

BEST BETS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

The **Metro Atlanta Association of Professionals** (**formerly AEN**) sponsors a **Brunch N Learn** about the state **DOMA** laws, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., **Southeast Mortgage**, www.southeastmortgage.com

DJ Liz Owen anchors the **Fantasy Party** at **My Sister's Room,** with a black out party, go go dancers and live performances, www.mysistersroom.com

Atlanta's Best Dance Party featuring rising star **DJ Billy Lace** of New York City who will be making his Atlanta debut. He is a resident DJ for Winter Party in Miami, XL Nightclub in NYC and Hydrate in Chicago. 10 p.m., **Jungle**, www.jungleatl.com.

SATURDAY, JAN. 25-SUNDAY, JAN. 26.

The Deeper Love Project hosts **two days of community discussions on black gay relationships**. Each session will cover topics including monogamy, sexual relationships with no strings attached, black gay marriage, can romantic relationships work in the black gay community, and standards and deal breakers in relationships. 1 – 4 p.m. both days at **The Evolution Project**, 583 Juniper St., Atlanta, GA 30308, www.facebook.com/thedeeperloveproject

SUNDAY, JAN. 26

Lips Atlanta is the home for **Dinner With the Divas**, hosted by **Savannah Leigh** and **Stiletto**, with all sorts of celebrity impersonators. The bar opens at 6 p.m. with show at 7:45 p.m., **Lips Atlanta**, www.lipsatl.com

The Midtown Men – featuring four of the stars of the original **"Jersey Boys"** musical – bring their crooning talents to the **Cobb Energy Center** at 7 p.m., www.cobbenergycentre.org

Amy Ray of **The Indigo Girls** sings from her new country album **"Goodnight Tender"** tonight at 8 p.m. at **Variety Playhouse**, with **Heather McEntire of Mount Moriah** opening, www.varietyplayhouse.org

Publicity photo

FRIDAY, JAN. 24

Lesbian faves **Halcyon** – "the girls with guitars" – visit **Eddie's Attic** at 10 p.m., www.eddiesattic.com

Featuring talents of all facets, the queer variety show **Sweet Tea** has comedy, drag, live music, slam poetry, queer performance art and more, featuring **Cleopatra Grace Jones**, **Ray Leota**, **Patrick Snipes**, **Jasmine Kevea Green** and more acts to be announced, hosted by, and including a performance by, **Taylor Alxndr** and **DJ PK Fire**, 9 p.m., **Noni's**, http://www.nonisdeli.com/

MONDAY, JAN. 27

Moral Monday GA Day at the Capitol: Tell the Gov. & Ga. lawmakers to 'Stop Putting Our Schools on Shoestring Budgets!' **EmpowerED Georgia Action** is partnering with **FACE It Cobb - Funding Awareness Campaign for Education for a Day at the Capitol** at 9 a.m. in Room 216. Please wear green and bring some shoestrings, www.shoestringcampaign.com.

TUESDAY, JAN. 28

It's finally here! The Tony-winning sensation **"The Book of Mormon,"** by the creators of "South Park," makes its long-awaited Atlanta debut. It's a musical comedy about two Mormon missionaries who visit Uganda and try unsuccessfully to spread the scriptures, 8 p.m., **Fox Theatre**, http://www.foxtheatre.org/

Fourth Tuesdays gathers at **Henry's in Midtown** for its monthly dinner. Cocktails and mingling begins at 6 p.m. with dinner served from 7 – 9 p.m. All lesbian, transgender and bisexual women are welcome, www.thehealthinitiative.org/programs-resources/programming/fourth-tuesday

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 29

LeBuzz starts its new **M4M HardBody Revue** with a cash award, 9 p.m., www.thenewlebuzz.com

The Atlanta Jewish Film Festival gets underway at venues throughout the area, with various queer programming such as **Eytan Fox's comic "Cupcakes,"** various times and locations. Tonight's opening night is at the **Cobb Energy Centre** at 7 p.m., www.ajff.org

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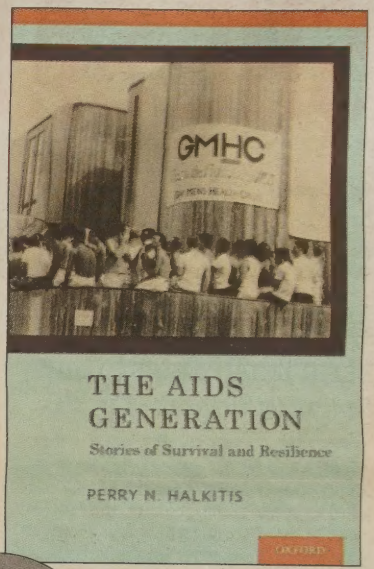
BOOKS BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

'AIDS Generation' survivors share bond

New book chronicles lives of middle-aged men who lived through pandemic



Some of the best experiences you had last year were with your friends.

When you think back about the highlights, you remember dancing together, eating together, late-night bull sessions, parties, travels and idle man-watching. Those shared experiences are the glue that forever hold your friendship together.

Or maybe, like the men in "The AIDS Generation" by Perry N. Halkitis, your bond is that you're survivors.

The history of AIDS is vast and can't be told without the stories of the people lost to the disease and the ones they left behind. Of the latter, says Halkitis, "... all the gay men of my generation, infected or not, are long-term survivors ..."

Those are the men who came of age in the 1980s when "the promise for sexual freedom and sexual expression existed..." They are the men who, in the prime of their lives and when they should've been the picture of health, watched their friends and lovers die and who were told, upon their own AIDS diagnosis, that they, too, would probably be dead within two years.

Perry N. Halkitis, author of 'The AIDS Generation,' tells the stories of long-term survivors. (Publicity photo)

But of course, that wasn't necessarily true. This book, the culmination of a large-scale project on gay men who have lived with AIDS for decades, pulls together 15 survivors who were "still alive to tell their stories as middle-aged men."

Some of them don't remember when they learned of their diagnosis, while some remember the day clearly. Regardless, all exhibited "the pause," as Halkitis calls the stress reaction to remembering that time.

Some of the 15 knew, deep-down, that they'd been infected; one said it would've been "a miracle...not to be positive." For others, it came as a surprise. Some got sick, while others waited for illness that never really came. All are "resilient," says Halkitis, and are now surprised and amazed to experience the kind of normal health issues that men in middle-age endure.

"I've been at the worst of this virus," one of the men told Halkitis, "and now I'm in the golden years of this virus. This virus has taken me halfway around the world, and I'm still here."

At first blush, "The AIDS Generation" may seem like it's more academic than not. That assessment is true;. there is plenty for academics in this book, but casual readers will find something here, too.

As one of the "AIDS Generation," author Perry N. Halkitis knew, specifically, which questions to ask of his subjects in order to get the memories and emotions he pulled from them. That questioning leads to a fresh sense of heartache in the telling of tales, and a distant theme of horror that bubbles with anger and ends with a general awe for life and an appealing sense of triumph. Despite linguistic stumbles that might've been better off edited out, that makes them compellingly readable.

I believe there are two audiences for this book: long-term survivors who count themselves among the warriors, and younger men who need to learn. If you fall into either category, then reading "The AIDS Generation" will be a worthwhile experience.

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MELISSA CARTER

THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID

Straight from the horse's mouth

Farm family votes to quit listening because I'm gay

Jeff answered the phone in the B98.5 studio the other morning, during which the caller asked to speak to our producer. Once Jeremy picked up the line I could see his frustration grow as he listened to whatever lengthy story the listener was telling him. He ended the conversation by slamming the phone on the receiver and continuing his work. Jeff and I asked what made him so angry, and Jeremy explained that the listener and his family had just taken a vote to stop listening to our show. The reason? I was gay.

This listener was apparently tending horses in a barn with 14 members of his family that morning and heard me talk about my girlfriend, which prompted "the vote." After the call, Jeff and Jeremy spent the next few minutes discussing how offended they were at hatred towards gay people. Mind you, I was not part of that conversation, since I was unaffected by the call and continued with my work. But to hear these straight guys genuinely disappointed in homophobia was refreshing. They also called the listener a coward for not talking to me directly. I must agree.

I have been fortunate in my decades-long radio career in Atlanta to rarely experience prejudice for being a lesbian. People are amazed when I tell them I have never received a piece of hate mail for that reason. Usually listeners get bent out of shape because I'm an opinionated female on the mic, having nothing to do with my sexuality.

There are other positive signs of acceptance in media. "Good Morning America" anchor Robin Roberts came out on Facebook, thanking her long-time girlfriend Amber Laign. She then talked about her on GMA, showing a picture of them at a family wedding. First Lady Michelle Obama took to social media to tell Roberts how happy she was for her, adding, "You continue to make us all proud."

Melissa Carter is currently one of the Morning Show hosts on B98.5. In addition, she is a writer for Huffington Post. She is recognized as one of the first out radio personalities in Atlanta and one of only a few in the country. Follow her on Twitter @MelissaCarter

Two former members of the Houston Oilers recently told the Houston Chronicle there were gay members on the 1993 team. They were called "unbelievable teammates" by Lamar Lathon, and Cris Dishman said having gay players in the locker room was "no big deal."

During the Tournament of Roses parade over the holiday, a gay marriage took place on the AIDS Healthcare Foundation wedding cake float. While watching coverage of the parade on HGTV, I noticed their coverage of the groundbreaking float was no different than that of any of the other floats. Nancy O'Dell even made a point to congratulate Aubrey Loots and Danny Leclair.

I like stupid humor, so I also have to mention the gay parody of "The Bachelor" that was posted on "Funny or Die," starring Jesse Tyler Ferguson and hosted by George Takei. Being able to make fun of things can be cathartic too.

It's human nature to want to be liked. Of course I hate the idea that a group of people spent time in a barn criticizing my life, and actually held a vote on turning the dial so they didn't have to hear me talk anymore. Even more, I hate the idea that one of those family members was gay, in the closet, and realized in that moment their family would never love them.

But that's not what I focus on. For one phone call that says my gayness should not be on the airwaves there are scores of others who support me and my family, including the two men I share a studio with every morning. Love really is stronger than hate, if you allow it to be. Those who are angry and exclusionary have their own demons that got them to that place, and I leave them to that struggle. Enjoying the people around you is much more relaxing, and doesn't end in slamming the phone to end a disturbing conversation.

RYAN LEE

SOMETIMES 'Y'

A bloodless revolution

The unfortunate potential for gay rights at Sochi games

Ryan Lee is an Atlanta writer.

Less than a month before the start of the Winter Games, Russian President Vladimir Putin has emerged as the most sinister Olympic villain since Tonya Harding.

Having spent the last decade clubbing his country with vintage totalitarianism, the Russian dictator is eager to impress the rest of the world with his revived empire. Awarding the 2014 Games to Sochi is what one would expect from an entity with the moral reputation of the International Olympic Committee, whose legacy on human rights includes embracing Hitler on the eve of World War II and expelling African-American athletes who became ambassadors of the Civil Rights movement in 1968.

However, as a sports fan and sentimentalist, my instinct was to oppose the idea of boycotting the games, despite Russia's grotesque campaign against LGBT life and culture. Specifically, I defer to the athletes who have committed their lives to achieving rarified excellence, and I generally doubt the effectiveness of boycotts that are exclusively passive.

Like any self-respecting Reality TV junkie, I adore Andy Cohen; and the ensuing criticism is couched with the privilege of a gay writer who has never been invited to judge a beauty pageant in one of the most homophobic countries on earth. Still, I was disappointed when I heard that the Bravo execu-queen was protesting Russia's anti-LGBT crackdown by not attending the Miss Universe pageant in Moscow last summer.

No gay Russian was protected, no solidarity shown nor progress gained, by the missed opportunity for one of the most flamboyant (and culturally powerful) gay men in America to prance through Red Square in defiance of Putin's violent ignorance. Cohen's mere existence qualifies as "gay propaganda," and his presence in Russia would have been a powerful test of the Russo determination to eradicate "non-traditional sexual relations."

In a few weeks, LGBT Olympians from across the globe, as well as the U.S. delegation to Sochi appointed by President Obama, will help us all understand the Russian government's sincerity in prohibiting any and all positive expressions of homosexuality. I continue to believe that Putin is too clever a tyrant to showcase his country's bigotry for an international audience.

If he is not, or if Russian vigilantes defend their homophobic laws by attacking LGBT protestors, it may be a necessary moment in gay rights history.

For a movement that started with a weekend of rioting, ours has been a remarkably bloodless revolution. There have been generations of war launched by more subtle requests than asking God to revise his position on abominations, but the accelerated success of the Gay Rights movement in America has occurred without the violence characteristic of human rights uprisings.

Without question, there has been ghastly violence inflicted upon individual LGBT Americans in the 45 years since Stonewall and long before, and there remain too many places in our world where any expression of homosexuality or gender variance is a death sentence.

And in reality, two men holding hands are as likely to be attacked walking down most of the streets in Georgia as they are in Sochi, Russia. Our inclusion in sitcom casts and victories with marriage equality can make us — and heterosexuals — forget about the enduring threat faced by those who are too much of themselves in the wrong place where it's always the wrong time.

I wish martyrdom on no one and abhor all violence. But it's hard for me to imagine a vodka boycott or online petition motivating the world to eliminate its violent opposition to LGBT human beings. I yearn to show solidarity with Jamaicans, Russians, Ugandans, Nigerians and the many LGBT populations that live in endless peril.

I believe we can do so by committing to making sure that our homeland is as safe to LGBT individuals as we say that we wish theirs could be. Yet, I have lacked the courage to sit intimately beside another man on a MARTA train or exchange kisses on the platform the way the young straight couple did.

Our presence in our communities is as important as LGBT athletes being in Sochi, and I am cheering for their — and our — safety and triumph.

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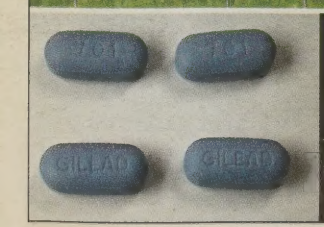
LGBT groups and GA Voice endorse in primary. Page 14



Truvada talk:

Town hall tackles tough topic of PrEP. **Page 7**

Mamma Mia:

Treat your mom to brunch at these fab eateries. **Page 21**

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Actually, between the warm water, endless sunshine and incredible variety of things to eat, drink and do, it's quite easy for everyone to go a little overboard in Key West.
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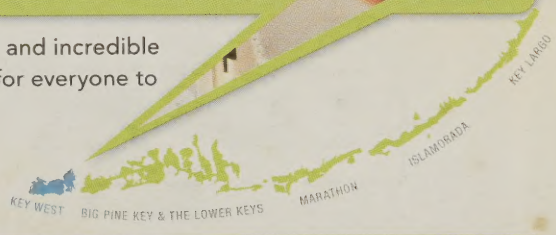

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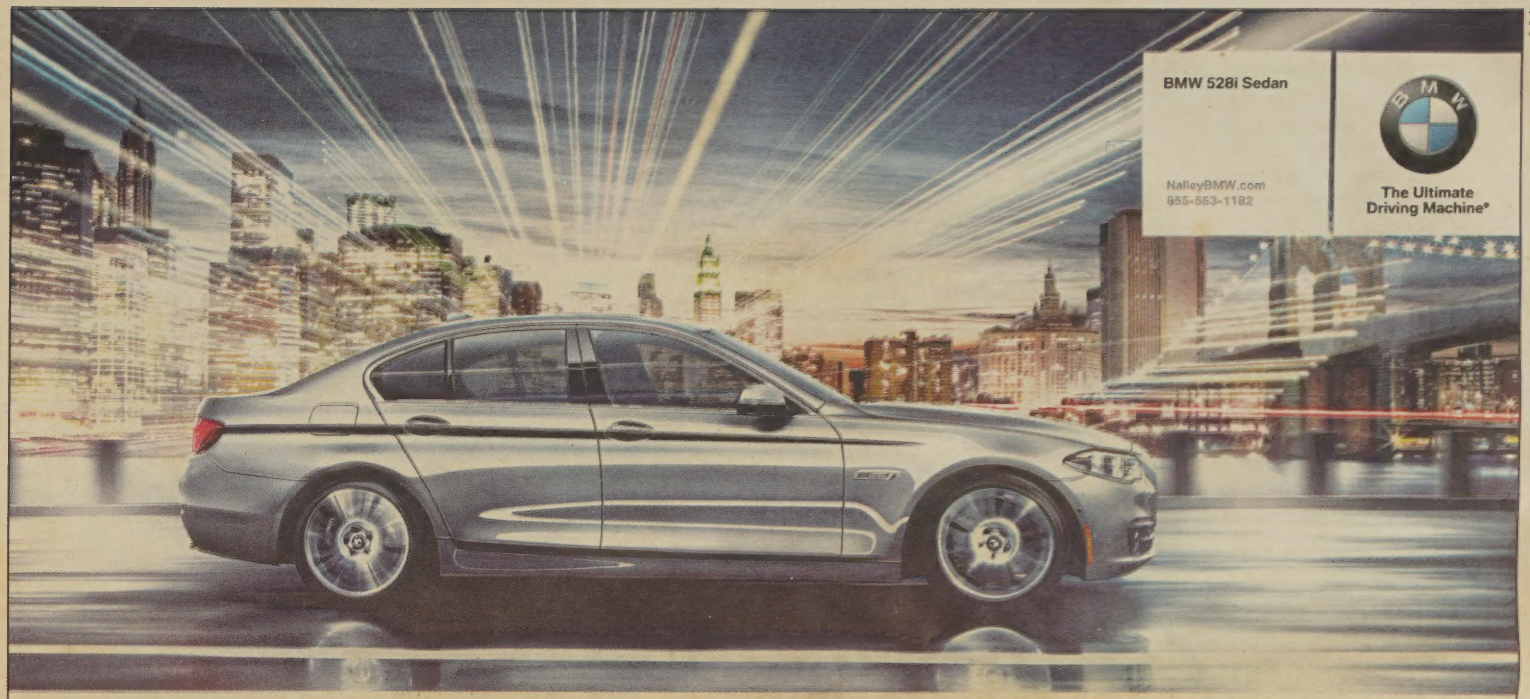

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National Advertising:
Rivendell Media, 908-232-2021
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Postmaster: Send address changes to the Georgia Voice, PO Box 77401, Atlanta, GA 30357. The Georgia Voice is published every other Friday by The Georgia Voice, LLC. Individual subscriptions are $60 per year for 26 issues. Postage paid at Atlanta, GA, and additional mailing offices.

The editorial positions of the Georgia Voice are expressed in editorials and in editor's notes. Other opinions are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Georgia Voice and its staff.

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OUTSPOKEN

FRIENDS & FOES IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"Shep wanted to and was ready to come out, and Roger just said no."

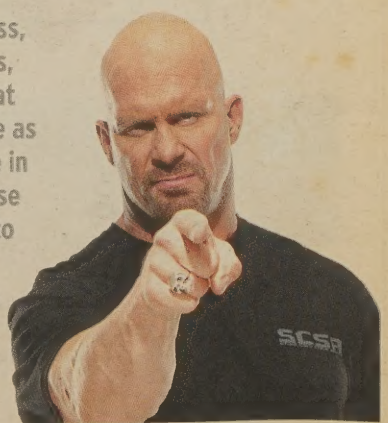
– A Fox News insider to Gawker, regarding a report that the network pressured anchor Shepard Smith to stay in the closet. (Gawker, April 30)

"Suddenly, if I want to mail something, I have to lick this guy's backside?"

– **Stephen Colbert** on the introduction of an official U.S. stamp honoring Harvey Milk. (Towleroad, April 24)

"What also chaps my ass, some of these churches, have the high horse that they get on and say 'we as a church do not believe in that.' Which one of these motherfuckers talked to God, and God said that same-sex marriage was a no-can-do?"

– **Stone Cold Steve Austin** on gay marriage. (Washington Post, April 24)



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Ga. marriage equality lawsuit settles into next phase

Meet the judge; get the roadmap for Inniss v. Aderhold

By PATRICK SAUNDERS
psaunders@thegavoice.com

Judge William S. Duffey Jr., a George W. Bush appointee, has been assigned to the federal lawsuit challenging Georgia's 2004 same-sex marriage ban. (Photo via The American Lawyer)

After Lambda Legal filed suit on behalf of three couples and a widow on April 22 to challenge Georgia's 2004 same-sex marriage ban, a torrent of attention on the case and the players involved rightfully followed. But that tidal wave has subsided as the defendants and their legal advisors review the complaint and both sides position themselves to get ready for the others' next move.

As of press time, there are now 71 active marriage equality cases winding their way through 31 different states and territories across the country. Each case has its own distinct characteristics that begin to reveal which way they might proceed, and Georgia's federal class-action suit, Inniss v. Aderhold, is no different.

While so much is yet to be decided, we do at least have a roadmap for the next couple of months, expert consensus on the merits of the case, and a new character to introduce into the story.

THE NEXT STEPS

There are two options when serving a federal lawsuit. It can be served through a process server, which gives the defendants 20 days to respond, or it can be served through a waiver of service, which allows defendants 60 days to respond and saves both parties the expense of using a process server. Lambda Legal opted to serve a waiver of service.

"There were a number of reasons that went into this in terms of timing," Beth Littrell, Lambda Legal senior attorney, tells the GA Voice. "We were serving a judge, and it seemed a responsible course not to serve the judge with a process server and instead give her an opportunity to waive service."

Lambda Legal has heard back from one of the three defendants, state registrar Deborah Aderhold, who has decided to waive service. This means Aderhold has until June 22 to file a motion or answer under federal rules.

"So we have that timeline set and we're waiting for the other two defendants [Gwinnett County Probate Court clerk Brook Davidson and Fulton County Probate Court Judge Pinkie Toomer], and they have until May 22 to respond or we will serve them with a process server," Littrell says. If that occurs, those two defendants would have 20 days to respond and would have to go to the expense of using the process server.

"I think it's fair to say that we'll hear from the other side by answer or motion by the end of [June]," Littrell says.

If the defendants decide to fight the 2004 same-sex marriage lawsuit, they may all be represented by Attorney General Sam Olens (whose office confirmed to GA Voice that he would defend the ban) or they may have their own law firms and representatives—however, no matter which defendant does what, all three would be part of the same trial.

So the case can break in several directions depending on what each party does in the next couple of months, and that's not even taking into account the trial phase yet if in fact a trial occurs.

The Bostic case in Virginia was decided in favor of marriage equality in seven months on motions, without even going to a hearing or a trial, but the Proposition 8 case in California took just over a year and included a trial while the Iowa case took just under two years. So it's too early to tell any sort of timeframe on when Georgia's LGBT community can expect a decision, Littrell says.

JUDGE WILLIAM DUFFEY PRESIDING

Once the case was filed last month, it was given a case number, which triggered a random judge assignment—federal Judge William S. Duffey Jr.

Duffey was appointed by President George W. Bush in 2003 to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, but for any case-watchers looking to read the tea leaves, they might draw conclusions based on his most famous case as a prosecutor—Duffey was a deputy to independent counsel Kenneth Starr in the Whitewater investigation from 1994 to 1995. He later served as campaign finance chairman to President Bush before becoming U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia and then moving to the bench.

But constitutional scholar and HRC Atlanta co-chair Anthony Kreis is not too concerned about Duffey's conservative credentials or his case history.

"While on the bench he has not handled any particularly high profile constitutional litigation or cases touching on major social issues, save his recent decision that invalidated the application of the Health and Human Services contraception mandate to Catholic nonprofits," Kreis tells GA Voice. But Kreis says that case doesn't give a "terribly great read" into how Duffey would handle Inniss v. Aderhold.

"Ultimately, while Judge Duffey is considered a reliably conservative jurist, I am confident that he will look at the facts and apply the law impartially as every federal and state court has done since Windsor by ruling against the state," Kreis says.

Alex Reed is an assistant law professor at the University of Georgia and an expert on same-sex marriage rulings who says to look north to the Michigan gay marriage case for hope of a conservative judge ruling in favor of marriage equality.

Judge Bernard Friedman is a Reagan appointee who, in Reed's words, "tore into the state's expert witnesses" in Deboer v. Snyder before issuing a "blistering" opinion explaining why gay couples deserved the right to marry.

"I don't think the fact that [Judge Duffey] is a Bush appointee is fatal, assuming that he is of a similar mindset to Judge Friedman out of Michigan," Reed says.

Reed also doesn't put too much stock in Duffey's involvement in the Whitewater investigation.

"I think it's easy to look at whom they're appointed by or what careers they had prior to being a judge and predict how they might rule," he says. "But I've been skeptical of a lot of that, particularly around the issue of same-sex marriage."

'HUMANIZING THE LEGAL ISSUE'

Ultimately, the chances of Inniss v. Aderhold delivering marriage equality to Georgia depend on the merits of the case. And all of the legal and constitutional scholars that GA Voice has spoken to about the case since it was filed last month have sang the praises of the legal team, the plaintiffs and the strategy.

Reed called the legal teams behind the case (Lambda Legal, Bryan Cave and White & Case) "three brilliant legal organizations."

"I think they were very thoughtful and did a very good job selecting their plaintiffs," Reed says, pointing out the teams' inclusion of plaintiffs with children, plaintiffs who are police officers or who have served in the armed forces.

"I think it's important in these types of cases to have plaintiffs who can humanize the legal issue for folks who may not know someone who is gay or lesbian," Reed says. "I think the plaintiffs are all phenomenal, great people."

Hillel Levin, an associate law professor at the University of Georgia and an expert on same-sex marriage rulings, echoes Reed's sentiments, saying, "This is the perfect group of plaintiffs for this case. It also appears that they have chosen correct defendants, having followed the pattern of successful suits in other states."

Eric Segall, a law professor at Georgia State University and a constitutional law expert, says, "The complaint is extremely well-written and presents a compelling case why same-sex marriage should be recognized in Georgia both as a constitutional matter and as a policy human rights matter."

Segall believes the defendants will fight the case, although he admits he hopes they don't. He also says the plaintiffs should win, citing the Windsor decision which struck down major portions of the Defense of Marriage Act last June.

"The equal protection clause should require Georgia to recognize same-sex marriage, otherwise Georgia will be denying to 'persons' within the state the 'equal protection of the laws,'" he says.

Talking Truvada: town hall hopes to educate, inform on HIV drugs

Advocates for PrEP want public to participate in open discussion on controversial topic

By DARIAN AARON

Tank Teachworth, former Mr. Atlanta Eagle and American Leatherboy titleholder, readily acknowledges he likes to have fun sexually. As an HIV-negative man, he believes all opportunities to stay safe should be on the table—and for him that means pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP as it's commonly abbreviated.

"Sometimes in leather things can get intense and sometimes condoms can break. Nothing is foolproof. I wouldn't call myself an exceptionally promiscuous person, but I like to have fun," Teachworth says.

"If there's another opportunity to stop one more case of HIV transmission then I feel PrEP is worth it. If I make a connection with somebody I'd like to do so responsibly," he adds.

Team Friendly Atlanta, a local nonprofit group dedicated to eradicating the stigma attached to people living with HIV, is directly tackling the issue of pre-exposure prophylaxis and its possibility as a game changer in HIV prevention at a town hall meeting on Thursday, May 15 from 6:30-9 p.m. at the Phillip Rush Center.

Randy Prophater, chair of Team Friendly Atlanta and organizer of the town hall, wants to cut through the noise and misinformation regarding PrEP by sharing accurate information directly with Atlanta's LGBT community.

PrEP is a once-daily dose of Truvada, the antiretroviral medication approved by the FDA in 2004 as treatment for people living with HIV. The drug is now heavily marketed to gay men and is the latest method of protection in the effort to decrease the number of new HIV infections.

But it's likely the groups most at risk for contracting HIV are either unaware that PrEP exists, lack access to the preventative drug or find themselves confused regarding the facts about PrEP amidst a vibrant public debate on its effectiveness and whether or not it will fuel an increase in promiscuity.

"There's a lot of information out there and it seems a lot of individuals and organizations are cherry picking—they're not giving the whole picture," Prophater tells GA Voice. "It's through education in a town hall forum that we provide people an access point."

Tank Teachworth, who is HIV negative and taking Truvada, will speak about his experience at the Team Friendly town hall on PrEP on May 15. (Courtesy photo)

One of the advantages of using PrEP in addition to consistently using condoms is the extra barrier of protection against HIV infection. It's important to acknowledge how PrEP can be empowering to individuals who lack autonomy when negotiating safer sex with their partner or partners, Prophater says. Prophater believes we're "selling ourselves short" if we don't use all of the tools available to curb new HIV infections, and this includes PrEP.

According to the results of a 2010 clinical trial by the National Institutes of Health, "among men who have sex with men with detectable levels of the medication (Truvada) in their blood, the risk of HIV acquisition was reduced by more than 90 percent." One might expect that with such a high success rate of PrEP as an anti-HIV blocking agent, more sexually active teens and adults would opt in and the hard data would cause PrEP detractors to retreat—but not so.

A LICENSE FOR RECKLESS BEHAVIOR?

Michael Weinstein, CEO of California-based AIDS Healthcare Foundation, one of the largest AIDS service organizations in North America, caused an uproar in the gay community and online when he spoke to the Associated Press this month about the illegitimacy of PrEP as a prevention tool and the gay men who use it.

"Let's be clear: It's a party drug," Weinstein said in the April 7 interview. "If something comes along that's better than condoms, I'm all for it, but Truvada is not that."

Weinstein and other critics have expressed doubt in the ability of gay men to adhere to the prescribed drug regimen. Their failure to do so would decrease the effectiveness of PrEP and increase the possibility exposure to HIV through a false sense of protection they believe PrEP provides. Weinstein believes true protection can only be attained through condom use. But it's the moral policing and accusations of sexual promiscuity by Weinstein that have angered many in the gay community. "There's an element in the gay community that espouses 'anything goes,' that is for sexual freedom and not giving an inch," Weinstein said. "But demonizing me or AHF isn't going to shut us up."

Teachworth, who is on PrEP, disagrees with Weinstein.

"So people who do heroin don't deserve to be protected? Is one life more valuable than the other? People are going to make poor decisions. Every human life deserves protection whether they're partying or not," Teachworth says.

Dr. Colleen Kelley, Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases at Emory University and a town hall panelist, believes PrEP should be widely available to people who feel they're at risk for contracting HIV.

"There's lots of different ways people can protect themselves from HIV and PrEP is one of them," says Kelley. "It's been shown to be effective in clinical trials and if effective intervention is available people should be able to use them."

PREP AND BLACK GAY MEN

One group that is disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS and could benefit from PrEP is black gay men. But according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "more PrEP prescriptions are written in the Southeast than anywhere else, of that more than half are actually for the female population."

So the question remains: what steps need to be taken on behalf of black gay men to ensure PrEP is a viable option in the arsenal of tools to protect them against HIV infection? Dr. Kelley believes this question is best addressed by four measures:

1. A person has to recognize that they are at risk for HIV infection.

2. A person has to be aware of the prevention tool (e.g. PrEP).

3. A person has to have access to the tool (for PrEP this means having access to a doctor and the prescription medication—in short, health insurance).

4. Finally, a person has to actually use the tool as directed (for PrEP this means taking it every day regardless of sexual activity).

But with a price tag of around $13,000 a year, Truvada can seem out of reach for those individuals who are at high risk for contracting HIV, such as black gay men.

"Gilead, the manufacturer of Truvada, has a patient assistance program. This is probably the best way for a person to gain access to the drug who may not be able to afford to pay the exorbitant price out of pocket," Kelley says of the cost. Teachworth is fortunate to be covered under his employer's health insurance plan and pays only $25 a month for PrEP.

The town hall meeting will specifically address the alarming rates of HIV infection among black gay men. Prophater and Team Friendly Atlanta believe it's necessary to direct their focus and efforts more on this demographic. But Prophater is also concerned that a discussion of sexuality along with a sexually transmitted disease will prove to be an intense potion.

"We live in the Bible Belt and there's already a stigma associated to anything related to sex," says Prophater. "We then amplify that by encouraging people to have better sex practices and we're fighting an uphill battle."

Atlanta resident Charles Stephens, a black gay man and director of Counter Narrative, a media advocacy and public policy group focusing on the lives of black gay men, believes the discussion around PrEP and black gay men needs to be reframed completely.

"I think it (PrEP) is also a part of our sexual rights. As black gay men we absolutely have a right to pleasure, we have a right to health; we have a right to every tool that's available to protect ourselves. There are arguments that suggest by having access to PrEP it will increase condomless sex and it will make people less afraid of HIV. I believe those arguments are rooted in a very moralistic and judgmental lens around sexuality," Stephens says.

TOWN HALL INFO

PrEP Town Hall
Hosted by Team Friendly ATL
May 15, 6:30-9 p.m.
Phillip Rush Center
www.teamfriendlyatl.org

Once-Daily

Discover the PREZISTA® EXPERIENCE

ABOUT PREZISTA®

PREZISTA® (darunavir) is a prescription medicine. It is one treatment option in the class of HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) medicines known as protease inhibitors. PREZISTA® is always taken with and at the same time as ritonavir (Norvir®), in combination with other HIV medicines for the treatment of HIV infection in adults. PREZISTA® should also be taken with food.

- The use of other medicines active against HIV in combination with PREZISTA®/ritonavir (Norvir®) may increase your ability to fight HIV. Your healthcare professional will work with you to find the right combination of HIV medicines
- It is important that you remain under the care of your healthcare professional during treatment with PREZISTA®

PREZISTA® does not cure HIV infection or AIDS and you may continue to experience illnesses associated with HIV-1 infection, including opportunistic infections. You should remain under the care of a doctor when using PREZISTA®.

Please read Important Safety Information below, and talk to your healthcare professional to learn if PREZISTA® is right for you.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What is the most important information I should know about PREZISTA®?

- **PREZISTA® can interact with other medicines and cause serious side effects. See "Who should not take PREZISTA®?"**
- **PREZISTA® may cause liver problems.** Some people taking PREZISTA®, together with Norvir® (ritonavir), have developed liver problems which may be life-threatening. Your healthcare professional should do blood tests before and during your combination treatment with PREZISTA®. If you have chronic hepatitis B or C infection, your healthcare professional should check your blood tests more often because you have an increased chance of developing liver problems
- Tell your healthcare professional if you have any of these signs and symptoms of liver problems: dark (tea-colored) urine, yellowing of your skin or whites of your eyes, pale-colored stools (bowel movements), nausea, vomiting, pain or tenderness on your right side below your ribs, or loss of appetite
- **PREZISTA® may cause a severe or life-threatening skin reaction or rash.** Sometimes these skin reactions and skin rashes can become severe and require treatment in a hospital. You should call your healthcare professional immediately if you develop a rash. However, **stop** taking PREZISTA® and ritonavir combination treatment and call your healthcare professional immediately if you develop any skin changes with these symptoms: fever, tiredness, muscle or joint pain, blisters or skin lesions, mouth sores or ulcers, red or inflamed eyes, like "pink eye." Rash occurred more often in patients taking PREZISTA® and raltegravir together than with either drug separately, but was generally mild

Who should not take PREZISTA®?

- **Do not take PREZISTA® if you are taking the following medicines:** alfuzosin (Uroxatral®), dihydroergotamine (D.H.E.45,® Embolex,® Migranal®), ergonovine, ergotamine (Cafergot,® Ergomar®), methylergonovine, cisapride (Propulsid®), pimozide (Orap®), oral midazolam, triazolam (Halcion®), the herbal supplement St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), lovastatin (Mevacor,® Altoprev,® Advicor®), simvastatin (Zocor,® Simcor,® Vytorin®), rifampin (Rifadin,® Rifater,® Rifamate,® Rimactane®), sildenafil (Revatio®) when used to treat pulmonary arterial hypertension, indinavir (Crixivan®), lopinavir/ritonavir (Kaletra®), saquinavir (Invirase®), boceprevir (Victrelis™), or telaprevir (Incivek™)

Once-Daily PREZISTA® taken with ritonavir and in combination with other HIV medications can help lower your viral load and keep your HIV under control.

The PREZISTA® Experience isn't just an HIV treatment. It's an HIV treatment experience as unique as you.

Find out if the PREZISTA® Experience is right for you.
Ask your healthcare professional and learn more at PREZISTA.com

Snap a quick pic of our logo to show your doctor and get the conversation started.

PREZISTA®
(darunavir) tablets

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION CONTINUED

- Before taking PREZISTA,® tell your healthcare professional if you are taking sildenafil (Viagra,® Revatio®), vardenafil (Levitra,® Staxyn®), tadalafil (Cialis,® Adcirca®), atorvastatin (Lipitor®), rosuvastatin (Crestor®), pravastatin (Pravachol®), or colchicine (Colcrys,® Col-Probenecid®). Tell your healthcare professional if you are taking estrogen-based contraceptives (birth control). PREZISTA® might reduce the effectiveness of estrogen-based contraceptives. You must take additional precautions for birth control, such as condoms

This is not a complete list of medicines. Be sure to tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you are taking or plan to take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

What should I tell my doctor before I take PREZISTA®?

- Before taking PREZISTA,® tell your healthcare professional if you have any medical conditions, including liver problems (including hepatitis B or C), allergy to sulfa medicines, diabetes, or hemophilia
- Tell your healthcare professional if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, or are breastfeeding
  - The effects of PREZISTA® on pregnant women or their unborn babies are not known. You and your healthcare professional will need to decide if taking PREZISTA® is right for you
  - **Do not breastfeed.** It is not known if PREZISTA® can be passed to your baby in your breast milk and whether it could harm your baby. Also, mothers with HIV should not breastfeed because HIV can be passed to your baby in the breast milk

What are the possible side effects of PREZISTA®?

- High blood sugar, diabetes or worsening of diabetes, and increased bleeding in people with hemophilia have been reported in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines, including PREZISTA®
- Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking HIV medicines, including PREZISTA.® The cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time
- Changes in your immune system can happen when you start taking HIV medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden
- The most common side effects related to taking PREZISTA® include diarrhea, nausea, rash, headache, stomach pain, and vomiting. This is not a complete list of all possible side effects. If you experience these or other side effects, talk to your healthcare professional. Do not stop taking PREZISTA® or any other medicines without first talking to your healthcare professional

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please refer to the ritonavir (Norvir®) Product Information (PI and PPI) for additional information on precautionary measures.

Please read accompanying Patient Information for PREZISTA® and discuss any questions you have with your doctor.

28PRZDTC0288PR8

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02/14 009283-140128

IMPORTANT PATIENT INFORMATION

PREZISTA (pre-ZIS-ta)
(darunavir)
Oral Suspension

PREZISTA (pre-ZIS-ta)
(darunavir)
Tablets

Read this Patient Information before you start taking PREZISTA and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This information does not take the place of talking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or your treatment.

Also read the Patient Information leaflet for NORVIR® (ritonavir).

What is the most important information I should know about PREZISTA?

- **PREZISTA can interact with other medicines and cause serious side effects.** It is important to know the medicines that should not be taken with PREZISTA. See the section **"Who should not take PREZISTA?"**
- **PREZISTA may cause liver problems.** Some people taking PREZISTA in combination with NORVIR® (ritonavir) have developed liver problems which may be life-threatening. Your healthcare provider should do blood tests before and during your combination treatment with PREZISTA. If you have chronic hepatitis B or C infection, your healthcare provider should check your blood tests more often because you have an increased chance of developing liver problems.
- Tell your healthcare provider if you have any of the below signs and symptoms of liver problems.
  - Dark (tea colored) urine
  - yellowing of your skin or whites of your eyes
  - pale colored stools (bowel movements)
  - nausea
  - vomiting
  - pain or tenderness on your right side below your ribs
  - loss of appetite

PREZISTA may cause severe or life-threatening skin reactions or rash. Sometimes these skin reactions and skin rashes can become severe and require treatment in a hospital. You should call your healthcare provider immediately if you develop a rash. However, **stop** taking PREZISTA and ritonavir combination treatment and call your healthcare provider immediately if you develop any skin changes with symptoms below:

- fever
- tiredness
- muscle or joint pain
- blisters or skin lesions
- mouth sores or ulcers
- red or inflamed eyes, like "pink eye" (conjunctivitis)

Rash occurred more often in people taking PREZISTA and raltegravir together than with either drug separately, but was generally mild.

See **"What are the possible side effects of PREZISTA?"** for more information about side effects.

What is PREZISTA?

PREZISTA is a prescription anti-HIV medicine used with ritonavir and other anti-HIV medicines to treat adults with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV-1) infection. PREZISTA is a type of anti-HIV medicine called a protease inhibitor. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

When used with other HIV medicines, PREZISTA may help to reduce the amount of HIV in your blood (called "viral load"). PREZISTA may also help to increase the number of white blood cells called CD4 (T) cell which help fight off other infections. Reducing the amount of HIV and increasing the CD4 (T) cell count may improve your immune system. This may reduce your risk of death or infections that can happen when your immune system is weak (opportunistic infections).

PREZISTA does not cure HIV infection or AIDS and you may continue to experience illnesses associated with HIV-1 infection, including opportunistic infections. You should remain under the care of a doctor when using PREZISTA.

Avoid doing things that can spread HIV-1 infection.

- **Do not share needles or other injection equipment.**
- **Do not share personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them, like toothbrushes and razor blades.**
- **Do not have any kind of sex without protection.** Always practice safe sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

Ask your healthcare provider if you have any questions on how to prevent passing HIV to other people.

Who should not take PREZISTA?

Do not take PREZISTA with any of the following medicines:

- alfuzosin (Uroxatral®)
- dihydroergotamine (D.H.E. 45®, Embolex®, Migranal®), ergonovine, ergotamine (Cafergot®, Ergomar®) methylergonovine
- cisapride
- pimozide (Orap®)
- oral midazolam, triazolam (Halcion®)
- the herbal supplement St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)
- the cholesterol lowering medicines lovastatin (Mevacor®, Altoprev®, Advicor®) or simvastatin (Zocor®, Simcor®, Vytorin®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifater®, Rifamate®, Rimactane®)
- sildenafil (Revatio®) only when used for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension.

Serious problems can happen if you take any of these medicines with PREZISTA.

What should I tell my doctor before I take PREZISTA?

PREZISTA may not be right for you. Before taking PREZISTA, tell your healthcare provider if you:

- have liver problems, including hepatitis B or hepatitis C
- are allergic to sulfa medicines
- have high blood sugar (diabetes)
- have hemophilia
- are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. It is not known if PREZISTA will harm your unborn baby.

  Pregnancy Registry: You and your healthcare provider will need to decide if taking PREZISTA is right for you. If you take PREZISTA while you are pregnant, talk to your healthcare provider about how you can be included in the Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry. The purpose of the registry is follow the health of you and your baby.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. **Do not breastfeed.** We do not know if PREZISTA can be passed to your baby in your breast milk and whether it could harm your baby. Also, mothers with HIV-1 should not breastfeed because HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in the breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Using PREZISTA and certain other medicines may affect each other causing serious side effects. PREZISTA may affect the way other medicines work and other medicines may affect how PREZISTA works.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take:

- other medicine to treat HIV
- estrogen-based contraceptives (birth control). PREZISTA might reduce the effectiveness of estrogen-based contraceptives. You must take additional precautions for birth control such as a condom.
- medicine for your heart such as bepridil, lidocaine (Xylocaine Viscous®), quinidine (Nuedexta®), amiodarone (Pacerone®, Cardarone®), digoxin (Lanoxin®), flecainide (Tambocor®), propafenone (Rythmol®)
- warfarin (Coumadin®, Jantoven®)
- medicine for seizures such as carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®, Epitol®), phenobarbital, phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
- medicine for depression such as trazadone and desipramine (Norpramin®)
- clarithromycin (Prevpac®, Biaxin®)
- medicine for fungal infections such as ketoconazole (Nizoral®), itraconazole (Sporanox®, Onmel®), voriconazole (VFend®)
- colchicine (Colcrys®, Col-Probenecid®)
- rifabutin (Mycobutin®)
- medicine used to treat blood pressure, a heart attack, heart failure, or to lower pressure in the eye such as metoprolol (Lopressor®, Toprol-XL®), timolol (Cosopt®, Betimol®, Timoptic®, Isatolol®, Combigan®)
- midazolam administered by injection
- medicine for heart disease such as felodipine (Plendil®), nifedipine (Procardia®, Adalat CC®, Afeditab CR®), nicardipine (Cardene®)
- steroids such as dexamethasone, fluticasone (Advair Diskus®, Veramyst®, Flovent®, Flonase®)
- bosentan (Tracleer®)
- medicine to treat chronic hepatitis C such as boceprevir (Victrelis™), telaprevir (Incivek™)
- medicine for cholesterol such as pravastatin (Pravachol®), atorvastatin (Lipitor®), rosuvastatin (Crestor®)
- medicine to prevent organ transplant failure such as cyclosporine (Gengraf®, Sandimmune®, Neoral®), tacrolimus (Prograf®), sirolimus (Rapamune®)

- salmeterol (Advair®, Serevent®)
- medicine for narcotic withdrawal such as methadone (Methadose®, Dolophine Hydrochloride), buprenorphine (Butrans®, Buprenex®, Subutex®), buprenorphine/naloxone (Suboxone®)
- medicine to treat schizophrenia such as risperidone (Risperdal®), thioridazine
- medicine to treat erectile dysfunction or pulmonary hypertension such as sildenafil (Viagra®, Revatio®), vardenafil (Levitra®, Staxyn®), tadalafil (Cialis®, Adcirca®)
- medicine to treat anxiety, depression or panic disorder such as sertraline (Zoloft®), paroxetine (Paxil®, Pexeva®)
- medicine to treat malaria such as artemether/lumefantrine (Coartem®)

This is **not** a complete list of medicines that you should tell your healthcare provider that you are taking. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you are not sure if your medicine is one that is listed above. Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your doctor or pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking PREZISTA without first talking with your healthcare provider.

How should I take PREZISTA?

- Take PREZISTA every day exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
- You must take ritonavir (NORVIR®) at the same time as PREZISTA.
- Do not change your dose of PREZISTA or stop treatment without talking to your healthcare provider first.
- Take PREZISTA and ritonavir (NORVIR®) with food.
- Swallow PREZISTA tablets whole with a drink. If you have difficulty swallowing PREZISTA tablets, PREZISTA oral suspension is also available. Your health care provider will help decide whether PREZISTA tablets or oral suspension is right for you.
- PREZISTA oral suspension should be given with the supplied oral dosing syringe. Shake the suspension well before each use. See the Instructions for Use that come with PREZISTA oral suspension for information about the right way to prepare and take a dose.
- If your prescribed dose of PREZISTA oral suspension is more than 6 mL, you will need to divide the dose. Follow the instructions given to you by your healthcare provider or pharmacist about how to divide the dose. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you are not sure.
- If you take too much PREZISTA, call your healthcare provider or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

People who take PREZISTA one time a day:

- If you miss a dose of PREZISTA by less than 12 hours, take your missed dose of PREZISTA right away. Then take your next dose of PREZISTA at your regularly scheduled time.
- If you miss a dose of PREZISTA by more than 12 hours, wait and then take the next dose of PREZISTA at your regularly scheduled time.

People who take PREZISTA two times a day

- If you miss a dose of PREZISTA by less than 6 hours, take your missed dose of PREZISTA right away. Then take your next dose of PREZISTA at your regularly scheduled time.
- If you miss a dose of PREZISTA by more than 6 hours, wait and then take the next dose of PREZISTA at your regularly scheduled time.

If a dose of PREZISTA is skipped, do not double the next dose. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of PREZISTA at any one time.

What are the possible side effects of PREZISTA?

PREZISTA can cause side effects including:

- See **"What is the most important information I should know about PREZISTA?"**
- **Diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia).** Some people who take protease inhibitors including PREZISTA can get high blood sugar, develop diabetes, or your diabetes can get worse. Tell your healthcare provider if you notice an increase in thirst or urinate often while taking PREZISTA.
- **Changes in body fat**. These changes can happen in people who take antiretroviral therapy. The changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the back, chest, and stomach area. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also happen. The exact cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Call your healthcare provider right away if you start having new symptoms after starting your HIV medicine.
- **Increased bleeding for hemophiliacs**. Some people with hemophilia have increased bleeding with protease inhibitors including PREZISTA.

The most common side effects of PREZISTA include:

- diarrhea
- nausea
- rash
- headache
- abdominal pain
- vomiting

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all of the possible side effects of PREZISTA. For more information, ask your health care provider.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

How should I store PREZISTA?

- Store PREZISTA oral suspension and tablets at room temperature [77°F (25°C)].
- Do not refrigerate or freeze PREZISTA oral suspension.
- Keep PREZISTA away from high heat.
- PREZISTA oral suspension should be stored in the original container.

Keep PREZISTA and all medicines out of the reach of children.

General information about PREZISTA

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use PREZISTA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give PREZISTA to other people even if they have the same condition you have. It may harm them.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about PREZISTA. If you would like more information, talk to your healthcare provider. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about PREZISTA that is written for health professionals.

For more information, call 1-800-526-7736.

What are the ingredients in PREZISTA?

Active ingredient: darunavir

Inactive ingredients:

PREZISTA Oral Suspension: hydroxypropyl cellulose, microcrystalline cellulose, sodium carboxymethylcellulose, methylparaben sodium, citric acid monohydrate, sucralose, masking flavor, strawberry cream flavor, hydrochloric acid (for pH adjustment), purified water.

PREZISTA 75 mg and 150 mg Tablets: colloidal silicon dioxide, crospovidone, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose. The film coating contains: OPADRY® White (polyethylene glycol 3350, polyvinyl alcohol-partially hydrolyzed, talc, titanium dioxide).

PREZISTA 400 mg and 600 mg Tablets: colloidal silicon dioxide, crospovidone, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose. The film coating contains: OPADRY® Orange (FD&C Yellow No. 6, polyethylene glycol 3350, polyvinyl alcohol-partially hydrolyzed, talc, titanium dioxide).

PREZISTA 800 mg Tablets: colloidal silicon dioxide, crospovidone, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, hypromellose. The film coating contains: OPADRY® Dark Red (iron oxide red, polyethylene glycol 3350, polyvinyl alcohol-partially hydrolyzed, talc, titanium dioxide).

This Patient Information has been approved by the U.S Food and Drug Administration.

Product of Ireland

Manufactured by:
PREZISTA Oral Suspension
Janssen Pharmaceutica, N.V.
Beerse, Belgium

PREZISTA Tablets
Janssen Ortho LLC, Gurabo, PR 00778

Manufactured for:
Janssen Therapeutics, Division of Janssen Products, LP, Titusville NJ 08560

Revised: December 2013

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007653-131217

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Gay Republican jumps into state House race

'I'm not your daddy's Republican,' says Christopher Deraney

By PATRICK SAUNDERS
psaunders@thegavoice.com

Political newcomer and openly gay Republican Christopher Deraney faces a tough fight for the Georgia state House seat in District 78. (Photo via Facebook)

You'd be hard-pressed to find two words that make many LGBT people see red quicker than "gay Republican." But political newcomer Christopher Deraney is shaking off the criticism and making a run as an openly gay Republican for Georgia State Representative in District 78.

Deraney faces no opposition in the May 20 Republican primary, and therefore will face off against incumbent Democrat Demetrius Douglas in the November general election. If he wins, he would be the first openly gay man elected to the Georgia state House—former Rep. Rashad Taylor didn't come out as gay until after he was in office.

The Log Cabin Republicans were quick to endorse Deraney after his announcement. "As the Deep South's first openly gay Republican to run for state legislature, Mr. Deraney recognizes that liberty is a right that every individual should enjoy, including our gay and lesbian citizens," said Jamie Ensley, president of the Georgia Log Cabin Republicans, in a press release.

House District 78 includes southeast Clayton County and parts of Henry County as well as portions of Jonesboro and Stockbridge and all of Lovejoy.

But Deraney has a long road ahead, considering that as of a March 31 disclosure report, he had raised only $975 versus $11,993.46 raised by his opponent, state Rep. Douglas.

FAITH AND CHOICE

"I'm not your daddy's Republican," Deraney tells the GA Voice.

The 33-year old Fayetteville native was raised in a Christian household and his religion remains a vital part of his life, saying that his "faith is [his] world."

While it's Deraney's sexual orientation and political affiliation that are making people's heads turn in this race, his path to the ballot stands out as well. Deraney was a professional opera singer until a near-fatal 2011 car accident left him unable to continue performing at that level. He moved on to a job with Delta Air Lines, and now looks to have his voice heard in a much different way by entering public service.

He acknowledges the difficulty gay men have had winning elected office in and around metro Atlanta, saying, "If I had to guess I would say it's an image thing. It's how people here in the south perceive masculinity vs. femininity."

MORE INFO

Christopher Deraney
www.christopherjderaney.com

When asked to cite his conservative bona fides, Deraney mentions his strong support for constitutional rights, and considers himself "fiscally very conservative."

"People want to work for their money and they want to keep it. We're just taxing and spending people," he says. "It's slowly coming back around, but it's not going to get back to the boom years if we keep taxing the hell out of everybody."

He's also pro-life, but unlike most male Republicans with the same position on abortion, Deraney has personal reasons for his view—he was adopted.

"I don't have the right to tell people what to do with their body, but I also know I was given a shot at life by someone placing me up for adoption instead of the alternative," he says. "I know Republicans have shot themselves in both feet with how they respond to that, but I know there is a time and a reason for everything. It's not black and white."

ON TRANS RIGHTS AND 'RELIGIOUS FREEDOM'

In the "Equal Rights" section on his campaign website, he includes age, gender, origin and sexual orientation, but noticeably leaves out gender identify.

However when questioned about it, Deraney says he supports trans rights.

"The statement on my website is an umbrella statement covering basic groups. However, because I do support trans rights, I am willing to readdress it more finitely," he explains.

Regarding the anti-gay "religious freedom" bills that failed in this year's legislative session, and which are bound to come back up again in 2015, Deraney believes it should be a business owner's right to serve or not serve whomever they want, just as it's up to consumers whether to patronize a business.

"But the wording of the bill was ambiguous and left the door open to discrimination," he says. "If they're going to pass a bill like that, we have to make sure it's worded so it doesn't encourage or promote further discrimination."

LGBT BACKLASH AND GOP FUTURE

Soon after Deraney's announcement last month that he was jumping into the race, the backlash of LGBT voices in comments sections and message boards began, with some calling him "blind" and a "masochist."

Deraney has seen and heard it all, calling it "quite an eye opener" and saying he doesn't see the logic in wishing for acceptance on the one hand, while being intolerant of certain people on the other.

The candidate foresees a future where his party comes around on LGBT issues, causing a significant number of those in the LGBT community to switch to the Republican Party.

"Younger conservatives are recognizing that if we are to be for freedom and liberty then we have to actually do that," he says. "Younger conservatives want to make that change and start being more inclusive."

"I think it's just going to take a handful of us gay Republicans who are willing to put our necks on the line to be the whipping boy to make that happen. It's not going to be an easy road, but it will happen," he promises.

And if it doesn't happen?

"Then you're not going to have a Republican Party anymore," he says.

State Rep. Simone Bell faces challenger on May 20

Erica Long vying to unseat lesbian incumbent

By DYANA BAGBY
dbagby@thegavoice.com

When elected to the state House in 2009, Simone Bell became the first out African-American lesbian elected to a state legislature. She held onto her seat two years ago in a tough battle for reelection after Republican redistricting forced her into a fight with fellow Democrat and incumbent Ralph Long.

But a spat on the House floor shortly before Sine Die this past session between Mr. Long and Bell led him to threaten her that he would run against her again if she did not back out of supporting a Fulton County Commission candidate he was planning to run against. Bell said she would not back down and on the last day of qualifying, instead of Mr. Long paying the $400 qualifying fee to run for the state legislature, his wife, Erica Long, signed up to challenge Bell.

Bell supporters say this is nothing but a "personal vendetta" by Mr. Long against Bell. But Mrs. Long tells GA Voice she has always wanted to run for political office and this year was the right time to do so.

Simone Bell (File photo)

GAVO: Why are you seeking reelection?

Simone Bell: Since taking office in 2009, I have built numerous relationships at the Georgia State Capitol with my colleagues, within my party and throughout the district. I've made great strides and look forward to building on those relationships to lead all of District 58 and move Georgia forward.

What are some of your top accomplishments while you have been in office?

I really found my stride during this last legislative session. Our numbers are so low as Democrats in both the House and the Senate sometimes it feels like you can't get anything accomplished. My strategy for 2014 was to work hard to kill bad legislation, be a louder voice in committees when questionable legislation arises and to work closely with moderate Republicans on issues that we can agree on and move forward.

What have some of your top accomplishments on behalf of LGBT people been while you've been in office?

WOW! 2014 was AMAZING for me and our state in regards to LGBT specific legislation. Taking on my Tea Party/Liberty Party colleagues against their so-called "Religious Freedom Bill" was definitely a highlight. It took a lot of organizing by a lot of people to really get the truth of the bill's intent into the media, business community and among my colleagues in the legislature. The day I spoke to the bill in committee [about her personal story being a lesbian and being in a same-sex relationship] will forever be a day that makes me proud, not just of myself, but of the entire LGBT community and our allies.

What are your three top priorities for the next session in the General Assembly?

We have some real work to do around worker's rights and working class Georgians. As a member of the Working Families Caucus I'm looking forward to partnering with labor groups and small businesses to be sure that both have the resources they need to be successful. Continuing the work on the Fair Employment Act falls into this priority.

Seniors remain a central focus of my work. We have laid a foundation to begin to get better services for seniors and their family members who are dealing with Alzheimer's disease. Georgia is really behind the curve on setting up needed resources. I'll continue to voice and a vote in the Human Relations and Aging committee to be sure our seniors remain a priority.

Two years ago we passed criminal justice and juvenile justice reform bills. Some of this legislation comes through the Juvenile Justice Committee on which I serve. We passed a fairly decent bill this year as it relates to juveniles, but we could have gone much further with assisting ex-felons with re-entry into society, access to employment, banning the dreaded "have you been convicted of a felon" box that appears on employment applications, and holding reporting agencies responsible for clearing a person recorded once they have completed their sentence. Right now there is no time obligation enforcement for reporting agencies to do so.

Why are you more qualified than your opponent?

I have a proven record of accomplishing effective work at the Capitol on state Issues. I've spent the last five years learning Georgia's system of state government and who holds power on different issues. Therefore, I am already prepared to engage and build on those strengths. The foundation for creating a better District 58 is already laid, and the wheels are already in motion throughout the district.

How can you or will you help with the federal class-action lawsuit filed seeking to overturn Georgia's same-sex marriage ban?

I will continue to be a loud voice for LGBT rights at the Capitol and throughout Georgia. I'm looking forward to educating my colleagues on the merits of the case, how the law has harmed our communities and families, and the importance of relationship recognition. It's great to have allies who can do the work, but no one can tell our stories like we can.

Erica Long (Courtesy photo)

GAVO: Why are you running for this office? As you know, there was some controversy surrounding your husband first telling Rep. Simone Bell he was going to run against her but then on the last day of qualifying, you filed to run.

Erica Long: I made the decision to run for State Representative, House District 58, because I finally understood that I am too talented, and have too much to offer, to continue sitting on the sidelines. No one who knows me well is at all surprised that I am running for office. I have been interested in politics and public policy since I first visited Washington, D.C., on my fifth grade class trip. For as long as I can remember, I have been passionate about understanding who the people are who make decisions that impact the lives of others and how individuals can use their voices to foster change in their communities. As a Harvard graduate, a native Atlantan, and an active member of my immediate community the idea of serving the state of Georgia is an intricate part of my DNA. I have always been groomed to be a leader and the people who know me best are excited that I have "finally" placed my name on the ballot.

Have you wanted to run for this seat for a while?

I have considered running for the legislature for the past several months. Because this is a relatively small race, it did not require me to do a tremendous amount of forethought in order to run. At some point, as a professional, educated woman, I grew tired of listening to those internal voices telling me why I "couldn't" run and decided to do it.

Why do you believe you are more qualified than the incumbent?

In addition to my significant government and professional experience (serving in the Clinton White House, on Capitol Hill in Washington, working as a federal and state lobbyist), and the fact that I am a native Atlantan with substantial ties to the entire community, I believe I would bring a more accessible and active approach to representing House District 58 that is preferred by the voters.

What are the top three issues you want to support in the General Assembly?

- Working directly with private insurers to bypass state government and expand Medicaid coverage to 700,000 Georgians.
- Foster state programs providing for age 0-5 early childhood education.
- Statewide funding for public transit.

What is your reaction to the recent federal lawsuit filed in Georgia seeking to overturn the state's same-sex marriage ban? If elected, how would you work to help the lawsuit succeed?

I was pleased to hear about the filing of the federal suit seeking to overturn Georgia's same-sex marriage ban. Our country has a long history of diverse communities seeking out federal relief from state-sanctioned bigotry. I hope that the lawsuit succeeds.

If elected, I will take initiative over educating my constituents about the lawsuit and connect any interested individuals with opportunities to add their own perspectives to the suit.

Are you active with any LGBT organizations? If so, what is your level of involvement?

Other than my strong support for equality and the civil rights of the LGBT community as a concerned individual and progressive Democrat, I have not yet played a leadership role over LGBT issues. I look forward to working with, and learning from, LGBT leaders as the Representative for District 58. Outside of my professional life, I spend my free time volunteering at my son's school (I am the President of the PTA), working within my family's church (I am a Sunday School teacher) and working with my Sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Why should LGBT voters vote for you?

I will be a strong straight ally for LGBT voters. I learned from my first boss, U.S. Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) that the fight for civil rights and equality does not allow for drawing lines or limiting your efforts. We must all work together in the struggle to make our society more humane for all. As a Christian woman, wife and mother, I cannot be a part of any effort that espouses hate or that limits the justice owed to all communities. Failing to fight for the civil rights interests of the LGBT community goes against my values.

In addition to the specific issues of concern to LGBT voters, I will work to make Georgia a better place for all—including and especially working people, young people, and those who are often powerless. Because I am working to expand health care coverage, build a strong education system and bring economic development to our state, I am working for LGBT families, straight families, and all of Georgia.

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GA Voice endorses Kyle Williams in state Senate District 42 race

Now is the time for an openly gay man in the Georgia General Assembly

In the campaign to replace Jason Carter as the new state Senator representing District 42, a lot of talk has been making the rounds on who is the more progressive candidate: Kyle Williams or Elena Parent.

The two are vying for the Democratic nomination on May 20 and will then face Republican Greg Williams in November. District 42 is heavily Democratic and includes Decatur, Avondale Estates and portions of DeKalb County including neighborhoods from Buford Highway to DeKalb Avenue such as North Druid Hills, Morningside, Druid Hills, East Lake, Kirkwood and Edgewood. So it's fair to say whomever wins on May 20 will win the state Senate seat.

The GA Voice is endorsing Kyle Williams in this race. We believe he holds the values and ideals and the work ethic to make a great state Senator and fill the shoes of Jason Carter admirably.

While Elena Parent has the backing of all the Democratic Caucus thanks to her term in the state House from 2010 to 2012, those are not the only people she will be representing. Big names backing you do not necessarily translate to being an effective legislator to the "small" people who live and work in the district.

Williams is a 10-year resident and working attorney in Decatur. He has served on numerous boards and neighborhood groups and has shown the ability through a grassroots campaign—albeit an expensive one—that he is reaching the actual voters and residents who live in the district by receiving endorsements from school teachers, local environmentalists, moms and dads, business owners and neighborhood advocates.

And, yes, several LGBT groups and individuals are backing Williams—Georgia Equality (a group in which he served as board chair), the national Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, the Stonewall Democrats as well as openly gay state Reps. Simone Bell and Keisha Waites.

In their endorsement of Williams, the Stonewall Democrats—who endorsed Parent in 2010—said Williams "has deep connections to the district, and has been a visible and active presence locally pushing a variety of progressive causes, including LGBT rights. We believe the moment has met the candidate and that Kyle's leadership and activism will serve the voters of District 42 well in the state senate. He is a tenacious advocate who works well with others and these traits will make him an effective senator and voice for a new generation of progressive Georgians."

Georgia is in a place right now where our stories—the stories of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer people—are being listened to by local, state and federal lawmakers representing our state. We have reached a point in our movement, with a federal class-action lawsuit in the courts and everyone around the country paying attention to what happens here, where it is important to continue this momentum. We believe an openly gay man in our General Assembly—the first openly gay man in the state Senate—is important to realizing our goals for full equality in a Red State.

We know there are dozens of issues facing District 42 and we believe Williams, chair of the Decatur Education Foundation, member of the Private Bank of Decatur Advisory Board, treasurer of the Decatur Business Association and a local Rotary Club member is well qualified to handle these issues. He knows his community, he knows his constituents, he knows Georgia.

GEORGIA EQUALITY ENDORSEMENTS

STATE HOUSE

DISTRICT 39 – Erica R. Thomas (D)
DISTRICT 54 – Bob Gibeling (D)
DISTRICT 58 – Simone Bell (D)
DISTRICT 60 – Keisha Waites (D)
DISTRICT 74 – Roberta Abdul-Salaam (D)
DISTRICT 85 – Karla Drenner (D)
DISTRICT 86 – Michele Henson (D)
DISTRICT 91 – Dee Dawkins-Haigler (D)
DISTRICT 105 – Tim Hur (D)
DISTRICT 113 – Pam Dickerson (D)

STATE SENATE

DISTRICT 22 – Harold V. Jones II (D)
DISTRICT 36 – Nan Orrock (D)
DISTRICT 38 – Horacena Tate (D)
DISTRICT 42 – Kyle Williams (D)
DISTRICT 44 – Gail Davenport (D)

STATE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY –
Alisha Thomas Morgan (D)
REPUBLICAN PRIMARY –
Allen Fort (R)

FULTON COUNTY COMMISSION

DISTRICT 2 – Eric Broadwell (R)
DISTRICT 4 – Joan Garner (D)
DISTRICT 5 – Brenda Muhammad (D)
DISTRICT 7 – Robert Pitts (D)

GEORGIA STONEWALL DEMOCRATS ENDORSEMENTS

STATE HOUSE

Tim Hur for State Representative **District 105**
David Wilkerson for State Representative **District 33**
Stacey Evans for State Representative **District 40**
Sheila Jones for State Representative **District 53**
Pat Gardner for State Representative **District 57**
Simone Bell for State Representative **District 58**
Margaret Kaiser for State Representative **District 59**
Keisha Waites for State Representative **District 60**
Karla Drenner for State Representative **District 85**
Michele Henson for State Representative **District 86**
Billy Mitchell for State Representative **District 88**
Dee Dawkins-Haigler for State Representative **District 91**
Dar'shun Kendrick for State Representative **District 93**
Pedro Marin for State Representative **District 96**
Pam Dickerson for State Representative **District 113**
Spencer Frye for State Representative **District 118**

STATE SENATE

Harold Jones for State Senate **District 22**
Kyle Williams for State Senate **District 42**
Curt Thompson for State Senate **District 5**
Nan Orrock for State Senate **District 36**
Horacena Tate for State Senate **District 38**
Vincent Fort for State Senate **District 39**
Gail Davenport for State Senate **District 44**

FULTON COUNTY COMMISSION

John Eaves for **chairman**
Joan Garner for Fulton County Commission **District 4**

NEWS IN BRIEF

ANNUAL HEALTH INITIATIVE TO HONOR HEALTHCARE HEROES AT GARDEN PARTY

The annual Health Initiative Garden Party returns after a one-year hiatus on May 18 and local healthcare heroes will be honored for their contributions to the well-being of LGBT Georgians.

The Health Initiative decided last year to not hold the Garden Party, its largest fundraiser, because it received federal grant money to train and employ navigators to help people signing up for the Affordable Care Act.

This year marks the first year the Health Initiative is awarding its Legacy Award.

Dorothy Gallaway, an RN and nurse practitioner who recently retired after 20 years as the head of Family Health Enterprises, a nonprofit she founded to serve all people and their medical needs regardless of ability to pay, is one of the first recipients of the Legacy Award.

Gallaway receive high respect from the Health Initiative due to her help with physical exams of trans men and masculine identified lesbians, said Linda Ellis, executive director of the Health Initiative, in a recent interview.

"Two years ago, we began Real Bois Talk health education for masculine-identified women," Ellis said.

"We knew masculine-identified lesbians were not willing to seek traditional clinics and we needed to have a health fair where we could have a stud-only space or masculine-only space. And Gallaway and her clinic were willing to close their doors for a day and we scheduled appointments—and they were able to sit in a waiting area with their friends and people who look like them without fear or risk of being feared. For some, this was their first upper and lower physical exams," she said.

Also receiving a Legacy Award is Dr. Kimball Johnson, founder and medical director of Jobri Center for Integrative Health. Johnson worked 23 years in internal medicine, HIV medicine and sports medicine and was also an early board member for the organization under its original name, the Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative.

The Legacy Awards will not be an annual award and were created to recognize people for longstanding work to ensure everyone has access to quality healthcare.

Receiving this year's Healing Angel Award is Jeff Graham. Graham is the executive director of Georgia Equality but is also a founding member of Georgians for a Healthy Future and is a leader with the organization Cover Georgia, a group working toward Medicaid expansion for the state.

The Garden Party is the Health Initiative's largest fundraiser and helps fund programs that provide quality healthcare and services to LGBT people who otherwise could not pay.

This year's Health Initiative's Garden Party moves to the Phillip Rush Center where there will be music, dancing and honoring people for their contributions to LGBT health. (File photo)

MORE INFO

Health Initiative Garden Party
May 18
4-7 p.m.
The Phillip Rush Center
www.thehealthinitiative.org

NEW PROJECT AIMS TO EDUCATE ON BLACK GAY MEN'S ISSUES

The Counter Narrative Project was recently launched in Atlanta to "increase the representation of black gay men's voices in national conversations on issues of equity, rights and health by creating a platform for black gay men to tell their stories in the pursuit of changing policy."

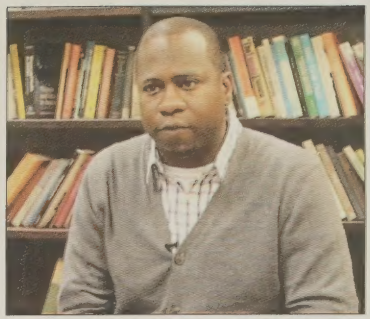
Charles Stephens, a longtime LGBT activist in Atlanta, is founder of the project. He says it is time to reveal the true stories of black gay men.

"We find many of the current narratives about black gay men to be simplistic, oppressive, or simply dishonest," he says.

"Our work will consist of community engagement, policy advocacy, social media activism and creating opportunities for black gay men to share their stories. Though our initiative is focused on black gay men, we are committed to working in solidarity with other organizations and groups committed to social justice," he adds.

Stephens says oftentimes black gay men are marginalized in conversations about topics such as LGBT employment discrimination, mass incarceration and the fight for marriage equality but are "overrepresented but often disempowered in HIV/AIDS policy discussions."

"It is this gap the Counter Narrative seeks to fill," Stephens says. "We also seek to contribute new ways of thinking about issues impacting black gay men such as public space, environmental justice, technology, sustainability and culture."



Charles Stephens, founder of the Counter Narrative Project, said it was time to start an organization in Atlanta dedicated to using black gay men's voices to help change national policies. (File photo)

MORE INFO

The Counter Narrative Project
www.thecounternarrative.org
www.facebook.com/thecounternarrative
Twitter: @buildingdesire

THE ATLANTA EAGLE IS NOT FLYING ANYWHERE AFTER BUILDING SOLD

The Atlanta Eagle is not going anywhere for now.

News that a group of buildings on Ponce de Leon Avenue were sold, including where the gay bar the Atlanta Eagle is located, was reported by the blog Atlanta Curbed and also the Atlanta Journal-Constitution earlier this month.

Robby Kelley, co-owner of the bar, told GA Voice that the new owners signed a three-year lease with the Eagle with an option to sign a five-year lease after that one expires. "And this one was better" than the lease from the previous owners, he said.

So in other words, the Eagle is not moving anywhere.

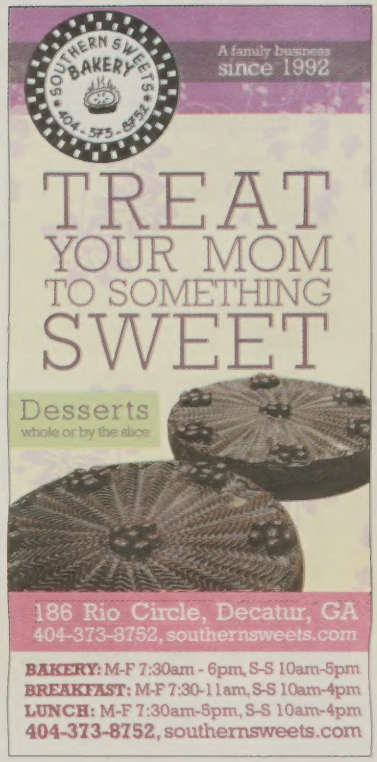
Kelley said the new owners want to fix up the area that includes the infamous Kodak building but he was told there are no plans to move or demolish the Eagle or put in condos in the area.

The buildings were sold to an unnamed investor by a group called 300 Ponce De Leon LLC, according to Atlanta Curbed.

Larry Culbertson with The C Group Commercial Real Estate Specialists that sold the building posted on his Facebook page his excitement with selling the Atlanta "landmark" location that includes the Eagle and the Goody's Kodak building.

"Well after a foreclosure process, rezoning, several contracts and a few tenants, Whole Foods Employment office, Mayor Shirley Franklin's campaign headquarters, at least eight contracts, [on May 1] this pearl on Ponce sold. Yes time to applaud! The Eagle will remain as the private investor who purchased this site plans for the future development," Culbertson wrote. "In accordance with the Ponce de Leon overlay, eventually the new owner will announce plans for this site."

In 2009, the Atlanta Police Department conducted a botched raid on the Eagle that resulted in a $1 million settlement from the city after patrons sued because their constitutional rights were violated.



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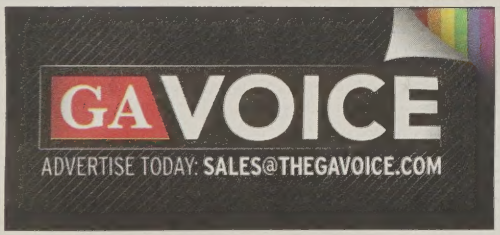

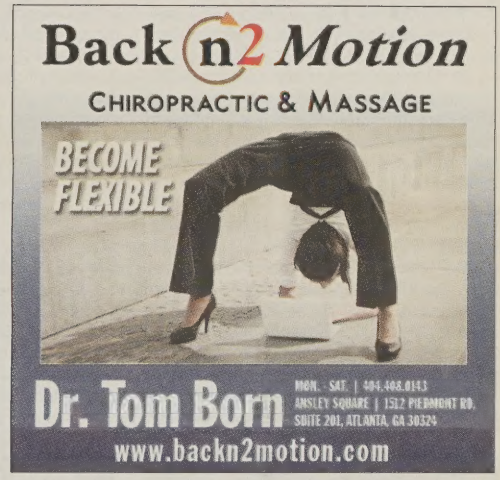

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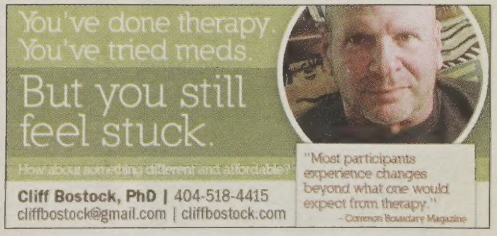
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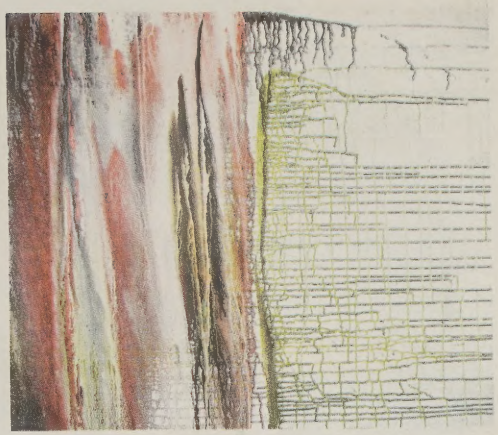

Tell me what you see

Alli Royce Soble comes from behind the camera and to the front of the canvas

By DYANA BAGBY
dbagby@thegavoice.com

You've most likely seen her at some of the hippest gay and gay-friendly parties and events, shooting photos of DJs and dancers in motion, bright streaks of lights capturing them in the moment.

But Alli Royce Soble is also an accomplished painter and will have a solo exhibit at Ponce City Market on Saturday, May 10. Royce, 41, an Atlanta native, is also known for her pouring skills behind the bar at Virginia-Highland hot spot La Tavola, a job she's had since 2000. She also shoots the restaurant's food photography and portraits.

"It has been such an amazing place," Soble says. "I have met some fantastic people over the past 14 years and I still love working there. There are several guests of mine that are also collectors of my work."

The passion for photography and then painting came at an early age and it's one she will always pursue, she says.

"Even as a little kid, I was always taking photos at school of people. I still have my Kodak Disc camera from the '80s. I shot with film, y'all!" she says.

Meanwhile, Soble took every painting class possible during her time at Georgia State University where she honed her skill of combining painting and photography.

"I have always been an artist," she says. "I knew that is what I was going to be."

GAVO: **Describe what work will be exhibited—the medium and what you are trying to express.**

ROYCE: The work is acrylic on canvas abstract expressionism. This series is from the past two years from two different studios. I took a bit of a hiatus in 2013, so part of the work is from 2012 and most is from these past five months.

Atlanta native Alli Royce Soble's House of Sobolovitz abstract expressionism painting exhibit opens Saturday and runs through May 31 at the new gallery at Ponce City Market. (Photos by Alli Royce Soble)

When did you start painting? What is your process like?

I started painting back in 1997 while in college at GSU getting my BFA in photography. I was never very good at drawing, so I felt that I would not be good at painting either. My professor, Larry Walker, was the one who inspired me to begin painting. The class was mixed media and collage. This allowed me to bring in my photography and mix it within the paintings. This was a great transition for me and allowed me to become comfortable with the paints and trying different processes. Over the years, I have let go of the collage aspect and focused purely on paint on canvas. I have been painting abstract work for over 10 years now. It is always evolving and changing. Even the work over these past few months has altered.

I paint with acrylic, because I use a lot of water to create texture in my pieces. Although oil is so lush and beautiful, I do not have the ventilated space for all the solvents necessary to do my work. Plus, I do not have the patience for the drying time. The process is a bit of a "controlled chaos." My intention is there, but the result varies. I have chosen the size of the canvas and I have an idea of my color palette, but what occurs is organic.

What tools do you use?

It depends on the variables. Do I use wet paint on a dry canvas, is it wet canvas and thick paint, or dry canvas with liquid paint? Has the canvas dried enough to add more or did I add too much water this time? The floor in my studio is a little wonky, so which way will the paint roll? These are all factors.

I use an array of old brushes that I have had for years. I have an array of spray bottles used for mixing paints on and off the canvas. There are different tools for scraping and shifting. I have ruined many floors.

I always love hearing what people see when they look at my work. Sometimes they see people or landscapes. I am eager to hear what you see. Tell me.

What's it like to have an exhibit at the brand new Ponce City Market?

I am very excited about being asked to show my work in this new space. Ponce City Market Pop Up Gallery is brand new to the scene. I am the third installation to be exhibited. I am following up some great artists already shown since March. Susan Bridges of Whitespace represented Tommy Taylor, and Cash Rojas Projects are currently representing Lonnie Holley. This space is one of the only spaces in Ponce City Market open to the public. I am very excited to see what PCM does for Atlanta and the surrounding community.

What about your photography? You are often seen at many parties and events taking photos, mostly casual photos. You also take professional photos. How do painting and photography complement each other?

A lot of people do know me as a photographer, not as much as a painter. I guess, socially, people always see me out at events taking photographs and documenting life in Atlanta. Like I mentioned before, I have been painting since 1997, almost as long as I have been taking photographs professionally. What I love about photography is that I can capture life in a moment. Reality. What I love about painting is to create something out of nothing. I create an emotion by the colors I choose and the textures I create. The emotion is also reality.

ART IN MOTION

Alli Royce Soble exhibit
House of Sobolovitz
Saturday, May 10 opening
Show runs through May 31
Ponce City Market
650 North Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30308
www.alliroycesoble.com

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Fulton County Commission

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Commission District 4

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JOAN GARNER

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VOTE MAY 20

Efficiency and Transparency in Government

Restoring citizens' confidence in their county government is my primary focus. For too long, we have focused on what doesn't work well, rather than putting our efforts into building a county government that works well for everyone.

Access to Government and Services

Most citizens don't need the services of Fulton County government on a daily basis, but when they do, they expect to be treated fairly and courteously to resolve the issue. Whether it is an emergency to call to 911, a child who uses the library to do their homework or services offered through our senior centers, I will work to improve citizen access by helping you navigate the system or taking your recommendations for improvements.

Responsible Economic Development

In our current economy, nothing is more important than a job that pays well. I will work to ensure that development within the county reflects growing and changing population trends and that 'blighted' areas of our county have a chance to succeed.

Health and Public Safety

Without our good health, little else is possible. I will continue to work to provide superior health and human services, especially for our senior community. I will work to ensure our youth have opportunities – such as libraries, parks and programs – that provide opportunities to keep them off the street and out of trouble.

Paid for and authorized by Garner for Fulton County Commission

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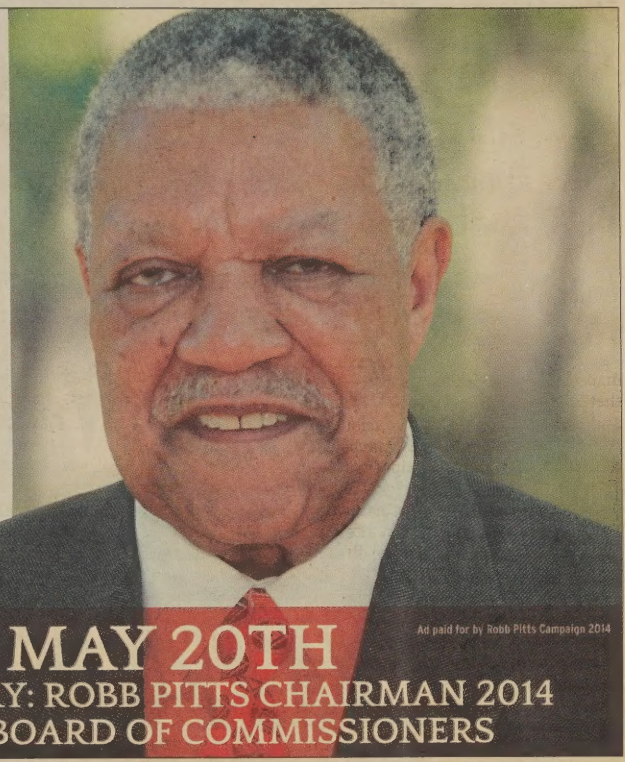

ROBB'S RECORD ON LBGT ISSUES:

SPONSORED and passed the Certified Committed Partners Benefits Ordinance for Fulton County granting domestic partner benefits to county employees.

SUPPORTS Southerners for Freedom to Marry and its cause of recognizing same-sex marriage in the South and in Georgia.

OPPOSED HB 1023 and Senate Bill 377 (Preservation of Religious Freedom Acts) in the Georgia General Assembly.

CO-SPONSORED county legislation on anti-discrimination in the work place to include "sexual orientation."

Robb will provide strong leadership on public safety. He will manage your tax dollars efficiently! Robb will work tirelessly to secure adequate funding for Grady Memorial Hospital. Robb will work to restore our library system to full-time hours and appropriate staff levels.

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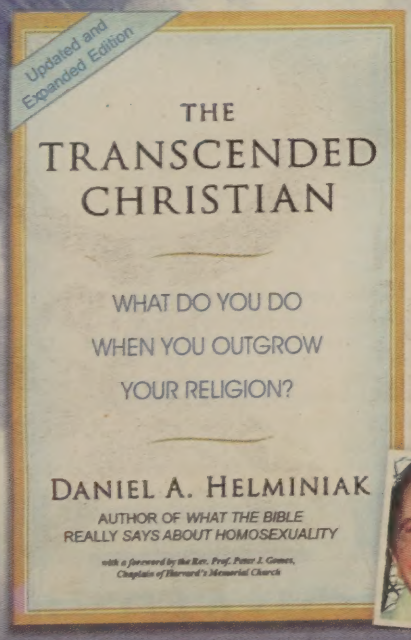
Ad paid for by Robb Pitts Campaign 2014



For the Easter season Daniel Helminiak offers a lifetime's learning in his new book *Transcended Christian.*

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EATING MY WORDS BY CLIFF BOSTOCK

When you're good to mama

Make Mother's Day extra special with these fine brunch spots

The General Muir is one of the hottest restaurants in Atlanta, offering up deli goodness on Mother's Day. (Photo via Facebook)

Mother's Day is probably the biggest brunch day of the year. I don't have a clue why. Brunch food is almost always mediocre, overpriced and perfect for inducing a diabetic coma or cardiac arrest. Maybe anesthetizing yourself and mama with mimosas and Hollandaise is an unconscious expression of your childhood rage. Maybe not.

Just so you know, Wikipedia traces the origin of the word "brunch" to an 1896 British essay in which the author effectively praises the hybrid meal as an alternative to the heavy, traditional Sunday dinner after church. He mentions its particular value to "Saturday night carousers."

That is of course the meal's ordinary function—guzzling hangover cures and meeting your friends to discuss in excruciatingly boring detail your Saturday night trick. Meanwhile, your friends' heads snap back and forth, cruising others on the patio and texting Grindr zombies until their drunken fingers lose erectile function.

So where to take mama? Practically every restaurant in town that's ordinarily open for brunch will feature a special menu. Just call your favorite or a popular fine-dining spot and make a reservation. Here are a few brunch spots that might prove a pleasant change from the usual:

Canton House: An unforgivable sin is taking your mother to a cafeteria or a god-awful, all-you-can-eat buffet. As close as you're allowed to get is dim sum, and Canton House deservedly remains the city's favorite. Carts bearing sumptuous small plates of authentic Chinese food continually circle the huge dining room. Don't worry. It's not all chicken feet. Unchallenging rice dishes, delicious barbecue buns, and shrimp dumplings, among many other mama-pleasing dishes, are available. A party of four or more will have the most fun. Warning: no reservations; the wait can be a bit long. 4825 Buford Hwy., 770-936-9030, www. cantonhouserestaurant.com.

The General Muir: There's a huge change in Atlanta's dining scene. People have finally stopped complaining that there's not a good deli in the city. The General Muir racked up just about every best new restaurant award last year and was cited in national lists too. Chef Todd Ginsberg offers the city's best Reuben by far, but you'll also find the likes of smoked hash with crisped pastrami, French toast made with house-baked challah, smoked salmon over latkes and trout-roe omelets. Sunday brunch is served 8 a.m.-3 p.m. and, alas, no reservations are taken. 1540 Avenue Place, B-230, 678-927-9131, www.thegeneralmuir.com.

Lips: Have you kept mama in the dark? Why not come roaring out of the closet and take her to gospel brunch at this drag dinner theater? She'll see that Jesus approves your "lifestyle." Hosted by Bubba D. Licious and the Sequin Sisters, the inexpensive dinner ($14.95) and show ($5), includes a mimosa or Bloody Mary, but you'll drink much more. The food is the usual chicken and waffles, eggs Benedict, and such. It's the experience that matters. Reservations are taken. 3011 Buford Hwy., 404-315-7711, www.lipsatl.com.

St. Cecilia: Maybe mama wants trendy and new. This is the latest in chef/restaurateur Ford Fry's empire (The Optimist, JCT, No. 246). The specialty is "coastal European food"—seafood and pasta, in other words. The Mother's Day menu (11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.) includes Chef Brian Horn's wildly popular hearth-roasted octopus; the "fontina melt" with a fried egg, prosciutto, mushrooms and frisee; and more conventional dishes like eggs en cocotte, smoked salmon and ricotta pancakes. 3455 Peachtree Rd., 404-554-9995, www. stceciliaatl.com.

Woodfire Grill: Does mama have taste and want a real meal? Take her to a special Mother's Day supper, 3-9 p.m. Sunday at this midtown favorite. Chef Tyler Williams is preparing a three-course meal that includes starters like black cod casserole or a vibrant salad and entrees such as pecan-dusted trout and ratatouille pot pie. 1782 Cheshire Bridge Road., 404-347-9055, www.woodfiregrill.com.

Cliff Bostock, PhD, besides being a longtime Atlanta dining critic, is a psychotherapist-turned-life coach, specializing in creativity, midlife transition and gay issues. He offers individual sessions and group workshops. www.cliffbostock.com.

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Photos by Mark Perlia

HRC Dinner co-chairs Andrew Land and Brigid Scarbrough.

Atlanta HRC Dinner 'most successful ever'

There were 1,300 people who wined and dined at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Atlanta for the 27th annual HRC Dinner and Gala on May 3 and organizers posted on Facebook the event was the "most successful Atlanta HRC Gala ever!"

Accepting the Visibility Award was weatherman Sam Champion, whose husband Rubem Robierb joined him on stage. Charis Circle, the nonprofit and education arm of Charis Books & More, the oldest lesbian-owned feminist bookstore in the nation celebrating 40 years in business this fall, was honored with the Leon Allen and Winston Johnson Community Leadership Award. Elizabeth Anderson, executive director of Charis Circle, accepted the award from philanthropist Edie Cofrin, an HRC member who also gave Charis the seed money to open four decades ago. And Rick Westbrook accepted the Dan Bradley Humanitarian Award on behalf of Lost-N-Found Youth, an organization dedicated to helping homeless LGBT youth get off the streets. The organization's six-member board held numbered candles representing the number of LGBT youth who die each day on the streets. U.S. Rep. John Lewis, who hasn't missed an Atlanta HRC Dinner in 27 years, danced on stage to the song "Happy" and gave a rousing speech that brought participants to their feet.

(Photos by Dyana Bagby and Patrick Saunders)

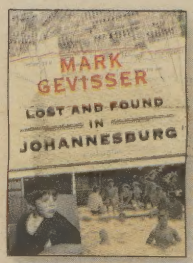
Live entertainment included Natasha Drena channeling Judy Garland, who she will be portraying in the upcoming "End of the Rainbow" at Actor's Express.

BOOKS BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Mark Gevisser (Photo by James Oatway-Panos)

New memoir lost in translation

Gay South African's biography fails to fascinate



Turn left.

You used to need a map to know that info, but these days, a voice from a screen tells you where to go on your trip. It's easy and fairly reliable, so who would want to go back to wrestling with a map, or wondering if turning left was right?

No, you haven't used a paper map in eons, but author Mark Gevisser has, and his maps show a city under change. In the new book "Lost and Found in Johannesburg," you might see how to use a paper map.

Growing up in South Africa, Mark Gevisser was obsessed with maps; in particular, an archaic book of streets and neighborhoods that helped him play a pretend-game with himself. It was many years later that Gevisser realized that segments of his hometown of Johannesburg were missing from the book.

Those were the neighborhoods in which the city's black population lived.

Though his Jewish ancestors had endured discrimination when they immigrated to South Africa a century ago, Gevisser was born into a life of privilege and was mostly insulated from the Johannesburg filled with poverty and black faces. And yet, his family had black servants that lived, by law, in small houses behind the main home.

Eventually it dawned on Gevisser that the racial system in "Joburg" was flawed. Perhaps he noticed because he had been immersed in a culture of activism, in which whites ignored rules and regularly mingled with blacks. Maybe it was because he was a world traveler and had gone to school in the U.S. at Yale, or because apartheid was beginning to unravel back home.

Or, perhaps, Gevisser's realizations came about because he began to understand that he was gay.

Today, Gevisser lives in Johannesburg, a city that's surprisingly progressive on issues of sexuality. He's married to a man he calls "C," who is of Indian descent. You would think that those factors—an award-winning white, Jewish gay writer married to a man of a different race in a city that relatively recently rejected apartheid—would make for a very fascinating book.

But alas, "Lost and Found in Johannesburg" is not.

First, it takes 80-some pages to get past chapters on infinitesimally-detailed streets and neighborhoods, and a litany of author Mark Gevisser's immigrant ancestors—neither of which will mean a thing to anyone who's not related or in Johannesburg. I lost both interest and patience, but I soldiered on anyhow.

Admittedly, that led me to small pockets of interest—life as a gay South African, brief accounts of apartheid and racism, small heartbreaking stories, and a breathless but disturbing tale of robbery—but they were buried beneath passages of esoteric literature and dozens of names, all of which became a blur.

Yes, I suppose that if you've lived in South Africa for a good length of time, or if you're interested in the detailed genealogy of total strangers, you could certainly give this book a try. Most readers who see "Lost and Found in Johannesburg," though, will want to turn left and keep on going.

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THEATER BY JIM FARMER

'A Secret History of Love' brings trans artist to forefront

Sean Dorsey Dance brings history of older LGBT movement to the stage

Sean Dorsey, considered the first trans modern dance choreographer, brings his 'A Secret History of Love' to Atlanta for a four-day engagement. (Courtesy photo)

Sean Dorsey has always been fascinated by LGBT history, so much in fact that he created a show examining how LGBT people met and interacted in the decades before communication became easy. "The Secret History of Love"—presented by Sean Dorsey Dance—visits 7 Stages next week for a four-day engagement.

Dorsey, based out of San Francisco and considered the first transgender modern dance choreographer, was able to create the piece courtesy of a two-year LGBT Elders Oral History Project.

"The spark for it was born out of my dual passion for LGBT history and bringing transgender dance to the stage," he says. "So often, we get left out of albums, books; I am passionate about sharing our histories. I am also passionate about how our elder LGBT people found community, love, and each other at a time when it was illegal to dress the way we wanted to. We hear a lot about Stonewall being the birth but we have always been around." He talked to LGBT individuals on both coasts as part of the transcripts, videotaping some and capturing audio of others, until he had hundreds of pages of transcripts.

Being what he calls an activist his entire adult life helped him gather subjects for his interviews.

After conducting interviews, his troupe debuted the work in San Francisco in 2012. Since that time it's been performed in 20 cities, big and small, for LGBT and non-LGBT audiences. When Dorsey took the production to Whitewater, Wisconsin, he expected 40 people and was pleasantly surprised when 600 showed up. His performances, he feels, draw a mix of people. "Transgender people next to a straight couple next to a lesbian next to churchgoers," he says.

He describes "The Secret History of Love" as a 75-minute work comprised of "full throttle athletic dancing, powerful and intimate storytelling and intimate theater."

"People can relate to it," he says. "It's not abstract; it's very human, about the longing to be loved."

For Dorsey, it's important that younger LGBT individuals realize that times were much different in decades past. "People my age or under forget there were no cell phones, no Gay-Straight Alliances, no Grindr," Dorsey says. "Maybe they found one book at the library, maybe a medical text book, but there was no culture, no novels or plays. These elders were so remarkably resourceful, brave and resilient to take risks, to risk their lives to venture reaching out for these friendships or sexual relationships."

Besides Dorsey, the troupe includes Juan De La Rosa, Brian Fisher, and Nol Simonse, with San Francisco trans performer Shawna Virago as the musical guest. Dorsey's dance troupe is an LGBT one, but he would love to have another transgender dancer in the mix one day.

His own journey coming out to himself and others as transgender was smooth. "I didn't experience internal angst or a lot of internal strife like most trans or LGBT people," he says. "The challenge for me was that I didn't know any trans dancer or choreographers. There were times when there was some loneliness."

Before this work he was responsible for Fresh Meat Productions, the country's first organization creating and presenting transgender arts programs.

DETAILS

Sean Dorsey Dance troupe
"A Secret History of Love"
May 22 - 25
7 Stages
1105 Euclid Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30307
www.7stages.org
www.seandorseydance.com

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Finding new four-eyed frontiers

Aging leads to poor eyesight leads to hipster haven

Bill Kaelin is the owner of Bill Kaelin Marketing Events and Consulting Agency in Atlanta, Ga. www.BillKaelin.com

I am getting older. I'm not in denial, but aging is really scary stuff if you think about it too hard. My age is apparent in obvious ways, like I no longer take ecstasy and come home from Backstreet at 10 o'clock on a Sunday morning. I have no judgment for people who can still party until the sun comes up, but I would like to think that even if Backstreet still existed I would be waking up for a FlyWheel class instead of grinding my teeth and smoking cigarettes until lunch. Been there, done that.

Father Time really reared his ugly head when one day I woke up and could no longer read my Facebook news feed on my iPhone. I was pretty much in denial that my perfect 20/20 vision was gone until I had to increase my text size to an over-the-top 80-year-old font style and yet still was sending weird misspelled texts to friends saying things like "We should really go to New Orleans Jizz Fest this year." I mean really?

Enough was enough. It was time. I bit the bullet. I took advantage of my 50 percent cheaper new health care plan thanks to Obamacare and got my eyes checked. I had never gotten my eyes dilated before and was shocked that I actually looked like I was on MDMA when I was handed my prescription for my first pair of glasses.

I was excited about it—a new accessory, right? But where do I begin? Thankfully I stumbled upon a super cool website called Warby Parker that helped take the stress away from picking out my first frames. Pick out five styles you think you will like, the company sends them to you in the mail to try them on! Buy a pair and they will give another pair to someone in need. Who doesn't like getting boxes in the mail and doing something good for the world?

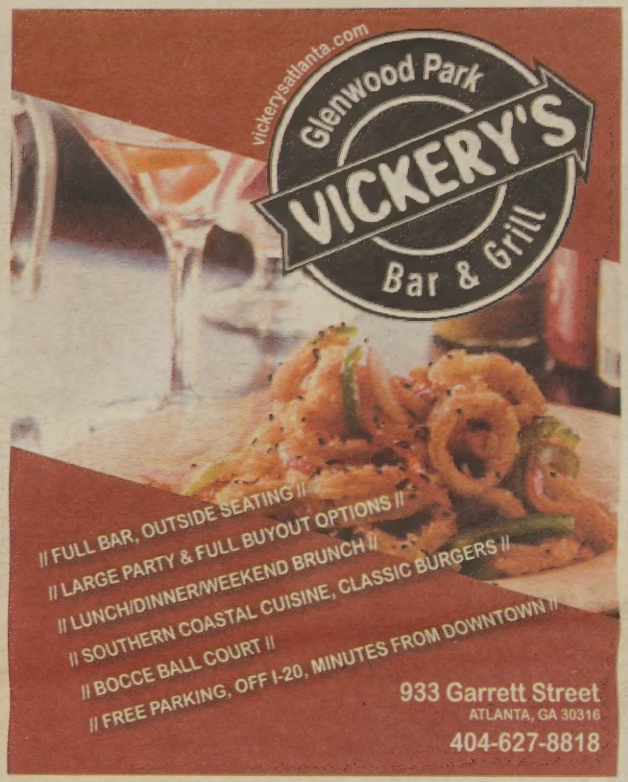
The new glasses thing was off to an exciting start until I actually put on my new vintage-inspired Soma specs. They are cute and it's kind of fun, but for those of us who have never been down this road wearing glasses for the first time can feel like being in a fish bowl. You're clumsy, awkward and it can actually make you feel a little insecure and old.

I want to age with grace and style but also there is nothing sexy about turning on your iPhone flashlight and killing the ambiance for those around you just to simply read a menu in a trendy new restaurant. Thankfully I could see the brown parchment paper cocktail list crystal clear the first night I wore my glasses and visited the killer Decatur hotspot, Kimball House.

Kimball House is a hipster haven that resides in the former Decatur railway depot and could quite possibly be the city's most masculine saloon complete with stuffed bobcats, leather booths, lots of marble and an amazing, sexy, cool staff who, strangely, almost all wore glasses.

The warm public house atmosphere can almost make you feel intelligent. Throw on a pair of lenses while sipping their amazing bourbon cocktails and feasting on items off their smart menu like the English pea salad, grilled octopus or roasted sunchokes and you'll feel like Einstein.

The entire Kimball House experience opened my eyes and made me realize there is still so much to explore in Atlanta. My night ended when my bartender sent me off with a big complimentary absinthe digestif cocktail. The anise flavored drink rumored to have psychoactive effects and often consumed by bohemian artists like Oscar Wilde may not have caused me to stumble home in the early morning hours like my younger days but it still made my eyes dilated—only this time, my pupils were bulging with exciting and new four-eyed frontiers.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Event spotlight

FRIDAY MAY 9

Join Atlanta-based writer **Pearl Cleage** for a reading and discussion of her new book "Things I Never Told My Daughter: Lies, Lessons and Love Affairs," 6 p.m., SCAD's Ivy Hall, www.scad.edu

SATURDAY MAY 10

Who's that running down the street in purple? It's **the Purple Dress Run**, benefiting Atlanta Bucks and Lost-n-Found Youth, with a kick off at 1 p.m. at Mixx and ending with a cookout at the Atlanta Eagle, http://atlantabucksrugby.org/

Friday, May 16

St. Mark United Methodist Church and Out On Film sponsor the Atlanta debut of the GLAAD Award-winning documentary **"Call Me Kuchu,"** examining the anti-gay climate in Uganda. Admission is free but donations are accepted, 7:30 p.m., Saint Mark, www.stmarkumc.org

BEST BETS

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Tell us about your LGBT event

There are two ways to submit your LGBT event for inclusion in our online and print calendars. Submit your event info to **www.theGAVoice.com** or e-mail details to **editor@theGAVoice.com**.

FRIDAY, MAY 9

Join Atlanta-based writer **Pearl Cleage** for a reading and discussion of her new book **"Things I Never Told My Daughter: Lies, Lessons and Love Affairs,"** 6 p.m., SCAD's Ivy Hall, www.scad.edu

Fourth Tuesday Happy Hour for all lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer women. Massage therapist **Cowbo** will be there offering massages for $1 a minute. 6-9 p.m. at Mixx Atlanta, www.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/fourthtuesdayatlanta/info

LGBT night at the **Atlanta Symphony Orchestra** features **Micah Wilshire, Rob Evan, and Shem von Schroeck for "Rock Tenors,"** 8 p.m., www.aso.org

A triple dose of fun – **Songwriters In-the-Round** night brings together **Hannah Thomas, Wyatt Espalin and Emily Kate Boyd**, 8 p.m., Red Clay Theatre, www.eddieowenpresents.com

Edie Cheezburger and her usual assortment of special guests present **"The Other Show"** drag event weekly at Jungle, 9:30 p.m., www.jungleatl.com

Pump Friday with DJ Mike Pope features HiNRG dance, 10 p.m. – 3 a.m., Heretic Atlanta, www.hereticatlanta.com

Boys Room is a Friday night dance party with **DJ Headmaster** and all sorts of retro music videos, Mary's Atlanta, www.marysatlanta.com

Traxx Girls night at My Sister's Room offers drink specials, great music and lots of beautiful women, 10 p.m., www.mysistersroom.com

SATURDAY, MAY 10

Atlanta Pride hosts its **Pride Ride**, 8:30 a.m. to noon, Alexander Lake Pavillion, 5089 Flat Bridge Road Southwest, Stockbridge, GA 30281

Who's that running down the street in purple? It's **the Purple Dress Run,** benefiting Atlanta Bucks and Lost-n-Found Youth, with a kickoff at 1 p.m. at Mixx and ending with a cookout at the Atlanta Eagle, http://atlantabucksrugby.org/

"Let's Make a Deal," hosted by Ken, is on tap tonight at Friends on Ponce, 6 - 10 p.m., www.friendsonponce-atl.com

Broadway and "Smash" star **Megan Hilty** comes to the Cobb Energy Centre, 8 p.m., www.cobbenergycentre.com

Publicity photo

MONDAY, MAY 12

It's the official gay ticket of the year! **Cher** un-retires and comes to Philips Arena, with **Cyndi Lauper** as her opening act, 7:30 p.m., www.philipsarena.com

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Bookmark www.thegavoice.com to get your daily dose of local LGBT events.

It's Southern Bears night at the Atlanta Eagle beginning at 10 p.m., www.atlantaeagle.com

Monica van Pelt brings Synergy to Burkharts, 11 p.m., www.burkharts.com

SUNDAY, MAY 11

International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia has its kickoff event with a church service and potluck/BBQ at 10:30 a.m., Church Without Walls in Candler Park at the First Pavilion, http://tinyurl.com/nrywqwl

Take your mother to **10th & Piedmont's Mom's Day Brunch Buffet**, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., http://www.communitashospitality.com/10th-and-piedmont/

Lips Atlanta hosts a special Mother's Day event/Gospel Brunch at 1:30 p.m., followed by Dinner With the Divas at 6 p.m., with a free glass of wine for mothers, http://www.lipsatl.com/

$2 well drinks are on tap all day and night at **Sunday Funday** at Bulldogs, 893 Peachtree St., Atlanta, GA 30309

Jazz @ 781, a series sponsored by St. Mark United Methodist Church, runs through June 8, Sundays at 6:30 p.m., www.stmarkumc.org

MONDAY, MAY 12

It's the official gay ticket of the year! **Cher** un-retires and comes to Philips Arena, with **Cyndi Lauper** as her opening act, 7:30 p.m., www.philipsarena.com

Monday Night Trivia, emceed by Wild Cherry Sucret, offers chances to win up to $250 in cash and prizes, 11 p.m. at Blake's, www.blakesontheparkatlanta.com

TUESDAY, MAY 13

The Atlanta Pride Committee hosts a preliminary meeting to discuss logistics for the 2014 Atlanta **Pride Festival Dyke and Trans Marches**, 6 - 7 p.m., Charis Books, www.charisbooksandmore.com

Free dance lessons are on the menu on **Two-Step Tuesdays**. 8 - 11 p.m., Heretic Atlanta, www.hereticatlanta.com

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

Bring an empty stomach to **Taco, Tequila and Beer Night** at Amsterdam Atlanta, with $5 tacos, 6 - 11 p.m., www.amsterdamatlanta.com

Don't miss Alabama Prom Night Bingo tonight with emcees Bubba D. Licious, Brent Star and Kimora Layou. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. with the program starting at 7:30 p.m., Jungle Atlanta, www.jungleatl.com

Actor's Express opens the play **"End of the Rainbow,"** in which Judy Garland tries to make a comeback with a series of high-profile overseas concerts. Gay radio personality John Lemley is in the cast, 8 p.m. tonight with performances through June 15, www.actorsexpress.com

Come enjoy **Piano Night with David Reeb** at Mixx Atlanta, www.mixxatlanta.com

Woofs Atlanta's Trivia begins at 8 p.m., www.woofsatlanta.com

THURSDAY, MAY 15

SAGE Atlanta's Cards and Social Hour is from 10 - 11 a.m. Phillip Rush Center, www.rushcenteratl.org

A meet and greet with **Democratic Senate candidate Kyle Williams** with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres is tonight, 6 p.m, Hunsaker Partners, www.hunsaker.com

The Metro Atlanta Association of Professionals (formerly AEN) hosts its **2nd annual Nonprofit Showcase**, 6 - 8:30 p.m., Jungle Atlanta, www.jungleatl.com

Charis and Cliterati pair up to present an inviting and fierce open mic & reading series. Hosted by the anarchic spoken word team of **Karen G and Theresa Davis, members of the Art Amok Slam Team**, this series cultivates the voices of authors, novices and an assortment of poets, songstresses and storytellers. May's featured poets are **Emily Lake Hansen**, author of "The Way The Body Had to Travel," and **Erin Ganaway**, author of "The Waiting Girl." This is a Charis Circle From Margin to Center Literary event. The suggested donation is $5. 7:30 - 9 p.m., Charis Books, www.charisbooksandmore.com

Publicity photo

THURSDAY, MAY 15

Out artists **Tegan and Sara** perform at Buckhead Theatre, with special guests Lucius and The Courtneys, 8 p.m., www.thebuckheadtheatre.com

Out artists **Tegan and Sara** perform at Buckhead Theatre, with special guests Lucius and The Courtneys, 8 p.m., www.thebuckheadtheatre.com

Decadence: A Night of Drinking and Debauchery is every Thursday starting at 10 p.m., hosted by Adam Bland and Ashley Mitchell with beats by **DJ Daryl Cox**. A wet underwear contest begins at 11 p.m, with a cash prize and dancers aplenty, TEN Atlanta, www.tenatlanta.com

THURSDAY, MAY 15 - SATURDAY, MAY 17

The MCC People of African Descent, Our Friends and Allies Conference visits Atlanta. For more information on the conference, sponsorship and registration, go to http://padconference.mccchurch.org/

Town Hall on PrEP with panelists from Emory University and the pharmaceutical industry and also the opportunity to discuss and find out more about Truvada. Hosted by Team Friendly. 6:30-9 p.m. at the Phillip Rush Center, www.teamfriendlyatl.org

FRIDAY, MAY 16

St. Mark United Methodist Church and Out On Film sponsor the Atlanta debut of the GLAAD Award-winning documentary **"Call Me Kuchu,"** examining the anti-gay climate in Uganda. Admission is free but donations are accepted, 7:30 p.m., Saint Mark, www.stmarkumc.org

The Third Friday Film Series screens **"Cloudburst"** at 7:30 p.m. at the First Existential Congregation of Atlanta, http://firstexistentialist.org/

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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BEST BETS

CONTINUED FROM **PAGE 27**

The Mr./Ms. Atlanta Eagle Bar Night is tonight at 10 p.m., www.atlantaeagle.com

The M4M Hardbody Revue, hosted by Envy Van Michaels, is a competition for men with a $100 cash prize weekly, LeBUZZ, www.thenewlebuzz.com

Destiny Brooks hosts Femme Fatale at 11 p.m. at Burkhart's, www.burkharts.com

SATURDAY, MAY 17 – SUNDAY, MAY 18

The AIDS Vaccine 200 is a bike ride across Georgia benefiting Emory Vaccine Center, beginning Saturday morning and ending at Emory Sunday evening, http://actioncycling.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1075777

A black gay/bi men's discussion group takes place in two parts, the first part from 2-6 p.m. on Saturday and then the second part on Sunday from 2-6 p.m. The topic for these discussions is May/December relationships. Hosted by the Deeper Love at the Evolution Project. Refreshments and snacks provided. www.facebook.com/thedeeperloveproject

SATURDAY, MAY 17

Mayhem with the Atlanta Titans, 1 – 5 p.m., Joe's on Juniper, www.joesonjuniper.com

Centennial Park is the home for **Party in the Park**, with musical guests **Girl Talk, MGMT, The Joy Formidable, Minus the Bear and Stokeswood**. Gates open at 3 p.m., www.partyintheparkatlanta.com

Free Texas Hold Em poker is available from 4 – 8 p.m. followed by various DJs at 10 p.m at Mixx Atlanta, www.mixxatlanta.com

The Atlanta Rollergirls host a double bill bout, one at 5 p.m. and the next at 7:30 p.m., Yaarab Shrine Center, 400 Ponce De Leon Ave, Atlanta, GA 30318

Viva La Diva – a variety show for divas, about divas, by divas. Hosted by Atlanta's very own funky divas **Edie Cheezburger and Gwendolyn Van Cartier, Viva La Diva** will also include a sensational sing-a-long featuring some of your favorite diva's biggest hits. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. and show starts at 6 p.m. Full bar and dinner menu available. All proceeds support Voices of Note, a project of the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus and Atlanta Women's Chorus. Jungle, www.jungleatl.com

SAGE Atlanta hosts a **Lesbians 50+ Potluck Social**; attendees are asked to bring a prepared dish, 6 – 8 p.m. Phillip Rush Center, www.rushcenteratl.org

The Atlanta Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence host their annual **Black and White Ball**, where the group makes financial contributions to the community, 7:30 p.m., 470 Candler Park Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30307, www.atlsisters.org

SUNDAY, MAY 18

Not ready to go home just yet? Join the early morning fun at **Xion Atlanta**, 3 a.m., www.xionatlanta.com

The 2014 Pet Cotillion/Piedmont BARK Spring Yappy Hour is an afternoon of fun to raise funds to help support the mission of Pets Are Loving Support (PALS), with a silent auction, a live DJ, complimentary drinks and nibbles and the crowning of this year's spokespet, 2 – 5 p.m., Piedmont Bark, www.piedmontbark.com

The Health Initiative's festive Garden Party returns, 4 – 7 p.m., Phillip Rush Center, www.rushcenteratl.org

Lateasha Shante Shuntel, Nicole Paige Brooks, Shawna Brooks and more divas host **Cell Block Sunday** at 8 p.m. at Blake's, www.blakesontheparkatlanta.com

Miss Barfly Pageant: Miss Natural Disaster, will be held during the Armorettes show at Burkhart's beginning at 9 p.m. Contestants compete in three categories and are expected to donate all tips to the Armorettes' PWA fund, www.burkharts.com

Photo via Facebook

SATURDAY, MAY 17

Centennial Park is the home for **Party in the Park**, with musical guests Girl Talk, MGMT, The Joy Formidable, Minus the Bear and Stokeswood. Gates open at 3 p.m., www.partyintheparkatlanta.com

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MONDAY, MAY 19

Trans and Friends: a Project of the Feminist Outlawz is a youth focused group for trans people, people questioning their own gender, and aspiring allies. This is a project of the Feminist Outlawz. This event is co-sponsored by Charis Circle's Strong Families, Whole Children Program. 7 - 8:30 p.m., Charis Books, www.charisbooksandmore.com

TUESDAY, MAY 20

Three-Legged Cowboy Tuesdays offer free **two step lessons** from 8 - 9 p.m. followed by an open dance from 9 - 11 p.m., Heretic Atlanta, www.hereticatlanta.com

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

Loosen up and settle in for some exercise with **yoga** at the MISTER Center, 5:30 p.m., www.mistercenter.org

"The Big Gay Game Show" is a monthly event featuring the likes of "Family Feud," "Match Game" and more, with special local guests, to raise money for Lost-n-Found Youth, 7:30 p.m., Jungle Atlanta, www.jungleatl.com

Charis welcomes **Dr. Erica Williams of Spelman College** to discuss her new book, **"Sex Tourism in Bahia: Ambiguous Entanglements,"** which examines how sexism, racism, and socio-economic inequality interact in the Brazilian sex industry. This is a Charis Circle Founding the Future of Feminism Event and the Suggested Donation is $5. 7:30 - 9 p.m., Charis Books, www.charisbooksandmore.com

Join Jack and Missy for **karaoke**, with no cover and $5 drinks, tonight at My Sister's Room, with doors opening at 8 p.m., www.mysistersroom.com

Primetime Wednesdays dance party revs up from 10 p.m. - 3 a.m. at Sutra Lounge, 1136 Crescent Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30309

THURSDAY, MAY 22

Cocktails in the Garden at the Atlanta Botanical Garden features live jazz from 6 - 10 p.m. http://atlantabotanicalgarden.org/

Charis celebrates **Debra Taylor's first novel, "The Queering of a Black Man,"** with a book signing from 7:30 - 9 p.m., Charis Books, www.charisbooksandmore.com

Transgender dancer and choreographer **Sean Dorsey** brings his acclaimed **"The Secret History of Love"** performance to the area for a four-day gig at 7 Stages, tonight at 8 p.m. through May 25, http://www.7stages.org

Ruby Redd brings **Dirty Boy Bingo** to Cockpit at 10 p.m., www.thecockpit-atlanta.blogspot.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

FRIDAY, MAY 23

Come meet celebrity chef **Shane McIntosh** at one of AGLCC's newest culinary members, Ocean Market Atlanta/Ocean Catering Company, for the 4th Friday networking event, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., www.oceanmarketatl.com

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28

Private to Public: The Art of Activism brings together 7 Stages artistic director Heidi S. Howard and transgender dancer/choreographer Sean Dorsey with panelists Melissa Carter, Theresa Davis, Topher Payne, and Scott Turner Schofield in a conversation about bullying. 6:30 p.m., 7 Stages, www.7stages.org

SATURDAY, MAY 31

Local favorite **Michelle Malone** visits Eddie's Attic tonight at 8 p.m., www.eddiesattic.com

TUESDAY, JUNE 3

Recording artist **Morrissey** visits Atlanta as part of his new U.S. tour, with special guest songwriter and keyboardist Kristeen Young, 8 p.m., Cobb Energy Centre, www.cobbenergycentre.com

FRIDAY, JUNE 6 - SUNDAY, JUNE 8

Atlanta Poly Weekend is a three-day international conference for the polyamorous and non-monogamous community, their friends, and allies, hosted by Relationship Equality Foundation and Atlanta Polyamory. In its 4th year, the event features over 20 educators from all across the globe, including experts in the field of non-monogamy research such as Dr. Elizabeth Scheff and Dr. Susan Mayer, to advocates and community leaders such as Franklin Veaux and Samantha Frazier. $60.00 at the door or via pre-registration, Holiday Inn Perimeter-Dunwoody. www.atlantapolyweekend.com

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

Atlanta Pride and Out On Film present the documentary **"To Be Takei,"** looking at the life of iconic out actor George Takei, as part of Stonewall Month activities, 7:30 p.m., Phillip Rush Center, www.rushcenteratl.org

SATURDAY, JUNE 21

Georgia Equality hosts its **10th annual Evening for Equality**, TWELVE Hotel, Atlantic Station, www.georgiaequality.org

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THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID

Famous flick fixes

Movie trivia to look for for when re-watching these classics

Melissa Carter is one of the Morning Show hosts on B98.5. In addition, she is a writer for the Huffington Post. She is recognized as one of the first out radio personalities in Atlanta and one of the few in the country. Follow her on Twitter @MelissaCarter

I learned something about an old movie the other day that blew my mind. When "Casablanca" was filmed, crews were not allowed to shoot at airports because of World War II. So, in the final scene of that classic film they used a cardboard plane and dwarf actors in the background to create forced perspective, allowing Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart to look like they are at a real airfield.

It made me wonder what other movie trivia I was missing, so I did a little research. Here is what I found:

• In "Back to the Future Part III," Marty hangs with a noose around his neck and is eventually saved by Doc. It turns out that scene almost killed Michael J. Fox. The first couple of takes he stood on a box for the stunt, but it just didn't look realistic enough. So Fox offered to do it without a box, but he was getting tired and miscalculated the timing of his hand, which was meant to go between the noose and his neck, and as a result he passed out. According to Fox, "It was a full 30 seconds before anyone noticed." The shooting was halted for the day and Fox was allowed to recover.

• In "Rocky" there is a scene where Rocky Balboa points out a mistake in the poster at the bout venue. In the poster he was wearing red shorts with a white stripe, and he explains that he will be wearing white shorts with a red strip. That was unscripted. Sylvester Stallone was forced to add the line because the art department made the genuine mistake.

• Natalie Portman dislocated her rib during production of "Black Swan," but the film's budget was so low they couldn't afford a medic. Portman gave up her trailer so one could be hired.

• Indiana Jones was supposed to have a sword fight against the Arab in "Raiders of the Lost Ark," but Harrison Ford was suffering from dysentery. So he suggested to director Steven Spielberg that Indy simply shoot the man.

• OJ Simpson was considered for the part of the "Terminator," but the studio was afraid no one would buy him as a killer.

• Lou Ferrigno voiced The Incredible Hulk in 2012's "The Avengers."

• Jim Caviezel was struck by lightning during the Sermon on the Mount scene in "Passion of the Christ."

• In "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest," there's a kissing scene between Jack Sparrow and Elizabeth Swann. In order to get an actual surprised reaction from Will Turner, the kiss was cut out of Orlando Bloom's script.

• For his scene in "Ferris Bueller's Day Off," Charlie Sheen stayed awake for 48 hours to give the desired "wasted" look.

• Beyoncé was almost a Disney princess. Casting director Jen Rudin says Beyoncé was once in the running for the lead voice role in "The Princess and the Frog," but the singer assumed she had the role and didn't want to audition. That cost her the part, which went to one of Beyoncé's costars in 2006's "Dreamgirls."

• Finally, Susan Sarandon added the kiss between her and Geena Davis at the end of "Thelma & Louise." Sarandon told her costar she was going to do it, but didn't share the information with anyone else, including director Ridley Scott.

The result of this research is a list of movies I will now have to go back and watch again to catch these tidbits. I'll have to make sure my girlfriend Katie Jo is in the room so I can share my random brilliance with her as these scenes pop up, and try not to get shushed along the way.

(Sources: E! Online, Slightly Warped, Total Film, What Culture, imdb)

SOMETIMES 'Y'

The 'act' of activism

Human Rights Campaign is the Kardashian of LGBT movement

Ryan Lee is an Atlanta writer.

By RYAN LEE

Toward the end of my coming-out process, I had the urge to put a gay bumper sticker on my car, which was probably overkill considering I drove a Geo Metro. I wasn't yet bold enough to ride around Alabama with a rainbow flag on my hatchback, so I opted for the yellow-on-blue equal sign that few were aware was the logo for a gay rights group known as the Human Rights Campaign.

That equal sign is less discreet 12 years later, with its visibility on social media leading to it being dubbed "Symbol of the Year" for 2013 by Stanford University. The recent Atlanta HRC Dinner & Silent Auction shared the downtown Hyatt with a group of high school students attending a separate function, and during his speech, HRC President Chad Griffin recalled overhearing one teenage girl ask another who were all of the dressed-up adults in the hotel lobby.

"Those are the equal sign people from Facebook," the girl replied, according to Griffin.

Griffin offered this observation as the best example of HRC "doing the work that needs to be done."

Indeed, if the goal is logo and brand recognition, HRC has done an exceptional job. However, if the goal is gaining LGBT rights, the Human Rights Campaign is the Kardashian of our movement: its fame (and wealth) dwarf its accomplishments, and its thirst for celebrity company has turned HRC into a star.

The Atlanta HRC dinner started with a nauseating video that celebrated the succession of marriage victories in the past year.

HRC had absolutely nothing to do with the two marriage cases decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2013 and was among the Gay Inc. contingency that initially opposed the lawsuit that led to California's Prop 8 being nullified. Yet, HRC is more associated with those historic victories than more deserving players simply because HRC's symbol was tinted red and went viral on social media.

It took three decades for the nation's leading gay rights group to shepherd a single piece of landmark legislation through Congress—30 years for our movement to score a lonely national victory on hate crimes.

Despite the overwhelming surge in public support on LGBT issues, and despite HRC's impressive roster of corporate sponsors, the organization still cannot get a barebones nondiscrimination bill to President Obama's desk.

Griffin commended Atlanta for scoring a perfect 100 on HRC's self-important Municipal Equality Index, without mentioning that the city achieved this status with no significant assistance from HRC, despite the millions of dollars that Atlanta activists have sent to national headquarters over the decades.

When it was time to ask the Atlanta crowd for (yet more) money, the multimillion dollar organization cynically tapped a couple of amateurs to make its plea. An otherwise adorable lesbian couple from Arkansas testified about HRC's assistance when one of them was fired from her job as a schoolteacher. The gay rights behemoth didn't win the lesbian her job back or enact a nondiscrimination ordinance in Little Rock, but HRC was able to organize a press conference and start an online petition, arguably the most useless form of modern activism.

HRC is a first-class public relations firm and a shrewd fundraiser. It is an unreliable partner, and hardly a leader, in the majority of LGBT struggles.

The fundraising goal for the Atlanta dinner was at least $150,000, which is more than the annual budget for one of the dinner's honorees, Lost-N-Found, a local nonprofit that serves homeless LGBT youth. None of the money raised at the black-tie dinner will go toward the housing or feeding of local youth in need.

Instead, HRC gave Lost-N-Found a lovely glass plaque as a symbol of its support.

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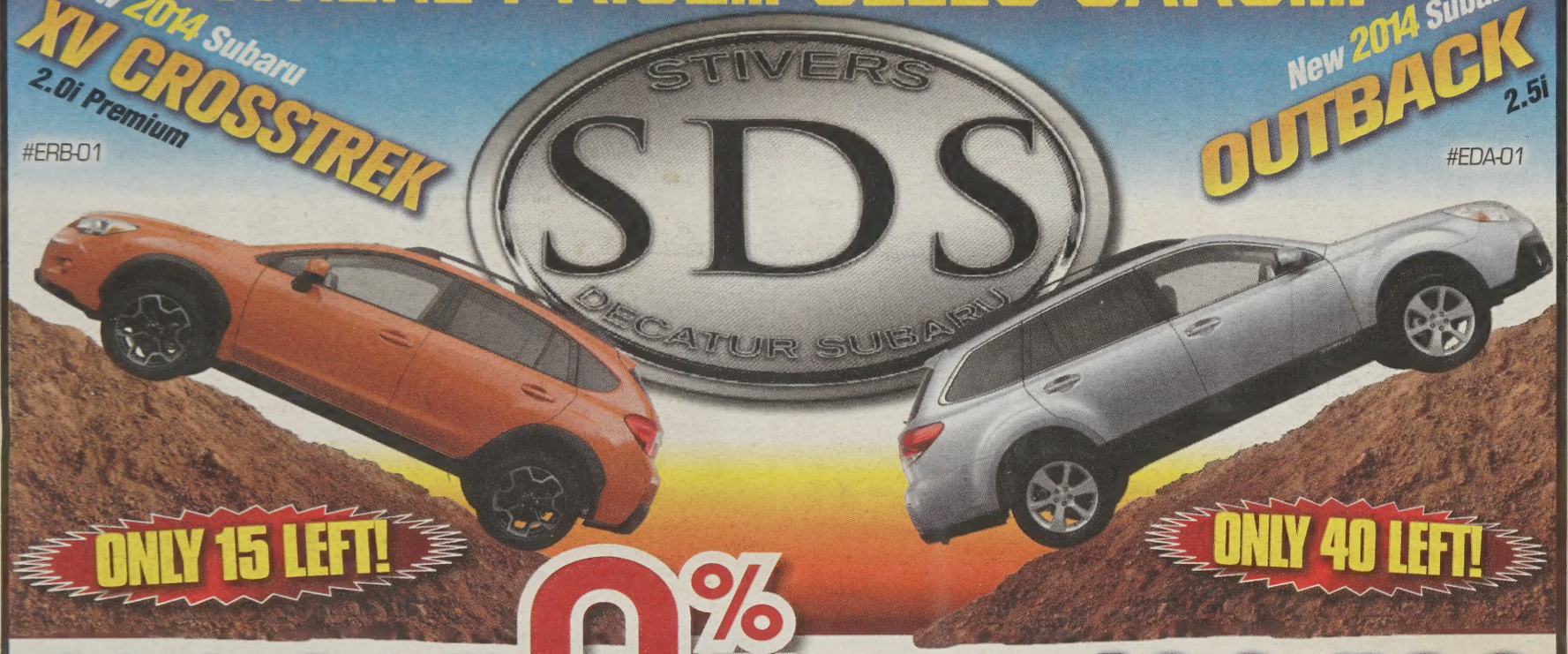

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